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THE BIRD HEADED SPHINX

A STORY of DETECTIVE WORK

BY

EDITH SESSIONS TUPPER

Our Next Feature Detective Story Will Be Entitled "A DOUBLE MYSTERY."

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURE STORY — PAGE

THE BIRD-HEADED SPHINX, by Edith Sessions Tupper 1

SERIAL STORY

THE RENEGADE DETECTIVE, by Randolph Badger 38

SHORT STORIES

TAKING CHANCES, by Beulah Poynter 21
NOT ROMANTIC, by John Lawrence 25
THE MYSTERY MAN, by Francis W. Doughty 28
MICKEY FINN TELLS FORTUNES, by Ernest Jarrold 33
WHY JOE SWORE OFF, by Ed Mott 35

MISCELLANEOUS MATTER

Lusitania May Be Raised by New Salvage Ship 20
Big Kettle a Relic 24
Why Lightning Hits Certain Trees 32
Making Matches 34
Aerial Mails for Denmark 37

CURRENT NEWS

Finds Ground Glass In Powder Puff—Old Faded Paintings Restored by X-Ray—Shot Frees Trapped Elk—How a Badger Works—Plan Houses To Be Sold Below Cost—Why Isn't It Hotter Nearer the Sun Than Away from It?—Showers of Fish—Newest Things 42

THE BIRD-HEADED SPHINX

AN INTERESTING STORY OF DETECTIVE WORK

By EDITH SESSIONS TUPPER

CHAPTER ONE

MY FAIRY GODFATHER

I STARED in the mirror at the haggard reflection there. Was it possible I looked like that? Where were the rosy cheeks, the dimples, the clear eyes of the past? Why, I was growing an old woman!—a regular old vinegar cruet—I said bitterly to myself.

I sat down before my dressing-table and relentlessly scrutinized myself. It was a dreadful shock to me to make the discovery of the loss of all my good looks. And yet I could not wonder at the change in myself. Two years of hammering French and Italian into the stupid, frivolous heads of the girl pupils at the fashionable St. Mary's Seminary was quite enough to transform one's entire visage.

I had just come from the recitation-room where I had passed an unusually trying day. I thought of the chattering, the giggling, the whispering and mockery of the stylish, handsome girls who were the *bête noir* of my drab existence. Their sly, malevolent glances at my shabby frock, their muttered jeers, their open defiance of my authority, were weapons that cut to my very soul—the weapons that only insolent girls use. "Oh, God!" I cried in my despair, "must I go on like this—in this horrible, monotonous grind? Must I grow old and crabbed and loveless? Is there nothing—nothing in life for me?"

I buried my head in my arms. I could not weep. Tears would have been a relief, but they would not come. I had not wept in two years of drudgery—after the loss of my

parents and home. I was only nineteen when I was hurled from a refined home into these distasteful surroundings. I was pretty and gay and admired then—now! Again I lifted my head and regarded that which I saw in the mirror. Again I dropped my face on my arms, with a groan. How could I go on? I asked myself.

I must have fallen asleep from sheer exhaustion and grief, for suddenly I started at a knock on my door. A maid handed in a letter.

A letter in itself was a novelty. I never got letters. All my old friends had dropped me when my reverses came. I had learned the bitter lesson that I must suffer along.

I gazed in absolute stupefaction at the envelope addressed in a fine, old-fashioned script. Yes, it was really for me. The post-mark was blurred. I could not decipher it. I crossed to the window, my heart pounding with excitement. I tore open the envelope and, by the fading twilight, read the following note:

"OSIRUS HOUSE, BRAMLEY-BY-THE-SEA,
September 15, 19—

"MY DEAR NIECE":

"Niece!" I ejaculated. "Who is this calling me niece?" I read on in augmenting astonishment: "I have been thinking of you a great deal since I returned from Egypt. I should have written ere this, but I have been so occupied with my wonderful treasures. You must forgive my negligence. I lived in Egypt for so many years that I lost all track of your parents." Again I paused. "Why, this must be mother's brother, Dr. Saltus Erskine," I burst out. "There really is such a person then. I believed him to be a myth." I read on eagerly: "I traced you to your present whereabouts and decided to write and ask you if you are not wedded to teaching"—"Heaven forbid!" I exploded—"to come and live with me. If you will be a daughter to me in my declining years, I shall do what is right by you. Come at once." Then followed directions, financial and geographical. I dropped the letter on the floor and literally fell into an adjoining chair. I really thought I was going to faint. Presently, however, I adjusted my wits, picked up the letter and re-read it. It was true then. My deliverance had come! I could be free of this abominable exclusive school where I had suffered every humiliation which refined cruelty could bestow. I was no longer a mental drudge, a butt for malice, a chattel of the pompous, arrogant, double-chinned, battleship Mrs. La Verne Cooper, the principal of the institution.

I fell on my knees and lifted grateful hands to Heaven. The tears came now, relieving my burning eyes and beating brain, tears of joy, of thanksgiving.

I rose from my knees, turned on the light, and went to rearrange my disordered hair. I started back in surprise from my mirror. Already I looked years younger. My cheeks were flushed, my eyes ablaze with joy. Hope had driven out despair. Once more I was alive—alive! I wanted to shout the word. The living death of my existence had departed and angels were rolling away the stone from my tomb.

I put my hair up in my old fashion. I donned my best gown and went down to supper with a high heart and head. I saw every one look at me in amazement as I swept—yes, I actually swept!—to my place at the table. I saw Mrs. La Verne Cooper raise her lorgnette and gaze at me with undisguised disapproval. I stared back at her with my haughtiest air until she dropped her lorgnette in dismay.

I was summoned to the august presence immediately after evening prayers. "Miss Burgoyne," the principal began icily, "I wish an explanation of your extraordinary demeanor at supper to-night. I am amazed and shocked——"

"You will be more so," I broke in flippantly, "when I tell you I am done with you——"

"Done with me?" she shrieked, growing so purple I thought she would burst.

"Yes, done; finished absolutely! To-morrow morning I leave your—your jail—never to return. I go to live with my uncle, Dr. Saltus Erskine, the celebrated Egyptologist, whose heiress I am to be." I wasn't sure of this last statement, but I put it in as a final blow.

It was funny to mark the change in the crafty old hatchet-face. She gasped once or twice, then rose unsteadily and lumbered toward me with outstretched arms. "My dear Miss Burgoyne," she began. "I am overjoyed."

I saw she was plotting to embrace and kiss me, and that was more than I could stand. I glided out of the reach of her black satin arms. "Kindly omit flowers!" I said more flippantly. "Also congratulations. I want nothing from you but the monthly check for my services in this penitentiary. I quit it with a joyful heart, I assure you."

I had never before realized how ugly the principal was. She glared in stony desperation at me, while her frizzled false front actually trembled with wrath. She could have killed me, I know, but she didn't dare. I was no longer the over-worked, abused teacher. I was an heiress and therefore to be handled with gloves. She turned to her desk and drew the check and handed it to me. "I grieve," she began, but I interrupted her. "Well, I don't!" I said brusquely, and without another word I left her, and I fear I banged the door behind me. I was absolutely, joyously reckless and didn't care a rap what I did.

Next morning I drove away from St. Mary's in great elation. Maggie, a warm-hearted Irish maid, my only friend in the seminary, saw me into the cab which I had summoned to take me to the train. But I marked curious heads peeping from various windows. The news of my good fortune had flown like wildfire through the school.

"Ah," Maggie whispered sagely as she put my bag in the cab, "they do be grinning the other side of their mouths now—thim young divils! How they've torminted yez."

"Never mind, Maggie," I said, "it's all over. You've been my only friend and, if my uncle is willing, I shall send for you to come to me."

Her downcast face lighted, and I left her calling down the blessings of all the heavenly hosts upon me. As I passed through the great iron gateway leading to the grounds of the seminary, I looked back. "Good-by forever, abomination of desolation!" I muttered. "Now my life is beginning."

Two days and a night's ride and I reached Bramley-by-the-Sea. I had wired my uncle the hour of my arrival and as I stepped from the train a smart footman touched his hat and said: "Miss Burgoyne?" I was soon seated in a luxurious carriage behind a superb span of bays. The drive through a beautiful country within sight and sound of the sea was delightfully bracing and, just freed from long confinement, I enjoyed every moment of my ride.

We passed a fine lodge and drove through a grove of wonderful old poplar trees. The roar of the surf grew ever louder and the salt air blew fresher each moment. Suddenly before me rose the towers of Osirus House—a vast pile of stone of strangely conglomerate architecture, much of which possessed Egyptian features. I saw pyramidal walls and huge pillars and a peristyle flanked by great stone sphinxes giving on a sunken lake filled with

lotos blossoms. Evidently my uncle had attempted to introduce a bit of his favorite land into his home and grounds. "What a fascinating place!" I mentally ejaculated as the carriage drew up before a broad terrace with stone balustrade, guarded again by the great crouching sphinxes staring with fatalistic eyes.

From the hall entrance came a slight, elderly man with snowy hair and gentle, kindly face. He almost ran to meet me. Behind him stalked a big bronze-colored man in fluttering white robes and whose ink-black hair was crowned with a gaudy turban—my uncle's Coptic servant I learned afterward.

"My child—my dear niece!" cried my uncle as he approached me. "So you have come to your old uncle who so shamefully neglected you. God bless my soul!—how like your mother." He kissed me solemnly with tears in his gentle, fading old eyes. My heart at once went out to this fairy godfather. Arm in arm we entered the house while the huge bronze man fetched in my belongings and regarded us with an indulgent smile. "Hafiz," cried my uncle, "this is your young mistress. You are to watch over her and guard her even as you have watched and guarded me."

Hafiz salaamed profoundly, then, coming to me, took my hand and bent his forehead upon it. This ceremony being over, he went to dispose of my luggage.

"I should have met you, Gwyneth," my uncle prattled, "but I have a lot of guests. I am indeed fortunate that you have come in time for one of the most interesting experiences of my life."

"Yes, Uncle Saltus," I replied. "And what is that?" He rubbed his thin, fragile hands and smacked his lips greedily. "I have three famous Egyptologists here," he went on. "They have come expressly for the affair—for the rites I might say. Mr. George Torgvald, an eminent Swedish professor and his sister—remarkable woman, remarkable! Then Justiniani, who is a wonderful authority, is come. Sanborn from New York, an intimate friend of your cousin Mark Erskine, my youngest brother's son—quite a house party, my dear. And now that you are here, everything is as it should be. You have a great, a wonderful experience before you. You are to be ushered into the presence of royalty—royalty, my child."

"Royalty," I faltered, quite overcome at the thought. How does one behave before royalty? darted through my brain.

"Yes, yes, Gwyneth," my uncle continued, "royalty indeed. Not modern mushroom royalty like the European upstart dynasties, but the ancient, the almost prehistoric royalty. To-night I shall open the sarcophagus and, in the presence of our distinguished friends, unwrap the mummy of Rameses——"

"Mummy?" I gasped in horror. "Mummy?"

"Yes, dear niece, a gorgeous, a beautiful, a splendid mummy which cost me three thousand dollars. I had to bribe every official in Egypt to get it out. It's the crowning success of my career as an Egyptologist—and will add new laurels to my name."

"But, dear uncle," I pleaded, "I—I'm afraid of mummies. I never saw but one in a museum, and it scared me nearly into fits."

My uncle laughed heartily. "That, of course, was when you were a child and thought it a hobgoblin. But now you are a young woman and the niece of a famous authority. Besides, you could not fear this great Rameses. He is so calm, so aloof, so princely. I assure you, my dear, you are greatly privileged to be present. Why, it's like the unveiling of a monument. It's a glimpse of old Egypt—the most wonderful country in the world! You will enjoy it, Gwyn—I shall call you Gwyn for short. You will positively revel in the experience. Now go to your room, rest and dress for dinner. You will find a gown on your couch which I wish you to wear—a robe suitable for the ceremonies of to-night."

I followed a smiling maid to my room, my head awhirl. So I was expected to revel with a mummy at midnight! I shuddered at the thought and cast furtive glances at every dark, remote corner in the great corridors through which I passed, well nigh expecting to see in the dim shadows a ghastly, grinning object leering at me with dead eyes.

CHAPTER TWO

IN THE PRESENCE OF ROYALTY

THE sumptuous appointments of my suite of rooms were in harmony with the rest of the mansion. After the dingy chamber, the dismal corridors of St. Mary's, the place appeared a palace. My feet sank deep in the velvet pile of superb Oriental rugs. The hangings were gorgeous with gold-and-silver embroideries, the furniture was of the rarest woods, the bath a sunken marble pool. I was housed like a princess. It was a fairy tale—it nearly took away my breath!

On a broad, luxurious couch lay a wonderful robe of soft, clinging crape, loose, slightly girdled at the hips with a band of glittering stones—it was like a garment out of the Arabian Nights tales. "Is this the gown my uncle wishes me to wear?" I asked the maid.

"Yes, Miss Burgoyne," she replied. "But will you bathe and sleep, please, before you dress?"

When I emerged from the perfumed waters of the pool I was clothed in a wonderful rose-colored kimona, the lace cover of the bed thrown back and I fell into a deep, refreshing sleep. I was awakened by the maid who gave me a cup of tea served in priceless china, after which she dressed me.

"Look at yourself," she said, leading me to a great cheval glass after she had finished.

Could it be possible that tall, stately young woman in the flowing Cleopatra robe could be the haggard, peevish girl I had seen two nights before? My mass of reddish-gold hair was heaped high on my head and confined by a band of jewels, topped in front by a golden asp's head. "The serpent of old Nile," ran through my mind, as I gazed at myself. Why, I looked like Egypt's famous queen—the sorceress whose glances had been death for brave adventurers.

Still dazed at the transformation, I walked slowly through the corridors and descended the vast stairway.

There was a group of people standing and sitting around a huge fire-place, in the lower hall, chatting animatedly. I heard my uncle cry, "Ah, here is my niece!" Every one looked up.

A sudden and profound silence fell on all. They simply devoured me with their eyes as I came on down. "I've made a hit," I thought exultantly.

A moment more and my uncle was presenting his guests. "Dr. Torgvald, my niece Gwyneth," he was saying. A tall, fair man with cold, blue eyes shaded by white lashes, bowed low. "Miss Martha Torgvald"; a woman rose and glided forward with a peculiar writhing movement—a woman of about thirty, lithe, sinuous, snaky, I thought. Every motion was serpentine and graceful. Her hair was like silver, it was so flaxen, her eyes were

green as jade with long, curling white lashes. Her lips were a scarlet slit, her face a chalky white. She wore a gown made on lines similar to my own, but where my robe was white, hers was scarlet. "These must be the distinguished Swedes," I said to myself. "She is like one of those old-time Norse women—a cold, fair Valkyrie, an Erl King's daughter." Miss Torgvald gave me a hand and caressed mine with her other. Her hands were like ice. I shivered as she touched me.

"Professor Luigi Justiniani," murmured my uncle. A tall, dark man strode forward with the lithe tread of a wild thing—a dominant, commanding figure with black, curling hair and beard, with eyes of black velvet in which lurked smouldering lights. He bent low over my hand and kissed it, then stepped back and glanced boldly at me, furtively licking his full, red lips. This man was repellant to me. I thought his features negroid. I turned quickly to meet Gerald Sanborn, a man of about thirty-five, powerfully built, with a strong face, keen eyes and granite jaw. I rather liked his appearance. He, however, greeted me very stiffly, which dampened my admiration a bit. "Your cousin Mark," my uncle finished, as a handsome man, very fit and stunning in evening things, lounged up to us, his hands in his pockets, coolly surveying me through narrowed lids. As he came closer I saw deep lines in his handsome face. His eyes were red, and there were puffs beneath them which I thought gave him a dissipated and jaded look.

He pressed my hand and murmured: "My word! but you're a beauty, cousin." No one heard him but myself. I frowned at his compliment and turned my shoulder. I heard him laugh shortly, and presently he and Mr. Sanborn strolled down the hall whispering together.

Now Hafiz appeared, stately and splendid in gorgeous array, and announced dinner. To my annoyance, Professor Justiniani was selected by my uncle to take me in. I found myself embarrassed at the bold glances of the Italian as well as his fulsome speeches. As dinner proceeded and he drank more and more wine, his insolence increased. "Who would have dreamed," he muttered once, "that the old rascal had hidden away so rare a beauty? I drink to those wonderful eyes."

I saw my cousin Mark watching us, and he seemed greatly diverted by the Italian's advances and my confusion. I began to detest my handsome cousin. It was a great relief when the dessert was brought. My ordeal was nearly over, I thought.

My uncle and Dr. Torgvald were engaged in an animated discussion. Gradually conversation ceased about the table and all listened to the argument. "Say what you will, Dr. Erskine," cried the Swedish authority, "you know I do not believe there is one in existence. For years Egyptologists have sought and never found one. It is known to have been the possession of royalty—that we all concede. But no one can find a specimen."

"Still I believe," persisted my uncle, "that they are in existence. Some one will be fortunate enough to unearth one."

"Of what do you speak?" demanded Justiniani suddenly.

"Of that rarest of ornaments—the bird-headed sphinx in lapis-lazuli, bearing the eye, the symbol of royalty. Have you ever seen one, Justiniani?" inquired my uncle.

"Nevaire!" replied my neighbor promptly. "I weesh I could find one. You know, of course, that J. Poindexter Martin has offered two hundred thousand dollars for a genuine specimen—yes?"

"I have heard so," returned my uncle; "indeed, he has written me on the subject. But, of course, it's not the money so much—but the great honor of finding one."

"I could dispense with the honaire," laughed the Italian, "if I could get that princely price."

I saw a shadow pass over my uncle's face. Evidently he did not approve of his guests' greed.

"What is this ornament, uncle?" I asked in the lull that followed.

"A jewel worn by the ancient Egyptian kings, my dear," he answered. "It is a small sphinx nearly as large as a silver quarter with the head of a bird. It is made of lapis-lazuli and bears on the under side a human eye which stamps it as one quite apart from any other sphinx. It may have been worn about the throat of a Ptolemy or upon the hand of a Pharaoh. At all events it's a rare ornament and worth a fabulous sum."

When we left the table we went into my uncle's library. A wonderful room it was, with black oak walls and cases filled with tomes of learning. At a cursory glance I saw many works on Egypt, huge volumes of marvelous lore. How is it possible for one head to contain so much knowledge? I asked myself, as I surveyed row after row of books, most of which plainly exhibited the marks of constant usage. While I was gazing at this formidable array Professor Justiniani joined me. I had hoped I was through with his unwelcome attentions, but here he was at my elbow. "Do you join us to-night?" he whispered, "at the ceremonies?"

"I fear I must," I replied with a sigh. "My uncle wishes it. Myself, I do not care to be present."

"No wondaire," he murmured; "what has beauty like yours to do with dried-up antediluvian mummies? You exist for the delectation of live men."

"You are offensive," I began, but, bending his head until his plundering eyes swept my scarlet cheeks, he muttered: "Do not play with me. I am not only Italian, but I have Moorish blood in my veins. *Prenz-garde!*"

I turned abruptly and left him. I looked about for Miss Torgvald, thinking I should escape the Italian by joining her. She was sitting on a sofa with my uncle, hanging on his words and gazing at him as if absolutely fascinated.

"Aha!" I said to myself, "so the Norse ice-maiden is courting Uncle Saltus. No doubt she would like to queen it over all this splendor. Besides, poor uncle can't live many years longer." Then I was ashamed of my suspicions. Doubtless the learned lady Swede merely admired my uncle's erudition and mentality.

I sought a chair near them and listened to their conversation, which was chiefly on hieroglyphics, temples and tombs. It was horribly depressing, I thought. I was not one bit interested in the burial places of Egyptian kings. But I resolutely stayed by. Every time I glanced away from them I encountered either the Satanic eyes of the Italian, the sinister gaze of the white-lashed Scandinavian or the somewhat mocking survey of my cousin Mark and the inscrutable face of his friend, Mr. Sanborn. "None of these people like me," I thought, "save that atrocious Italian whom I detest. I wonder why?" And like an electric flash came the solution of the riddle. "I expect they fear I am to get some of Uncle Saltus' money."

I was saddened. It had been such a glorious fairy tale up to the evening. I disliked the intrusion of this sordid phase. I didn't want my uncle's fortune. I had merely longed for a home and freedom from intolerable tyranny, Had I merely exchanged despotism for suspicion?

I became so depressed that my uncle suddenly appeared to remark my lack of spirits. The dear old man cut the lady from Scandinavia off in the middle of a rhapsody on scarabs and solicitously asked: "Are you not feeling well, Gwyn, my child?"

"I—I am rather tired," I stammered, hoping he would excuse me from the mummy-fest. Instead, taking my hand in his and giving it a reassuring pat, he exclaimed: "Ah, my dear, all that lassitude will be dispelled once you behold my Rameses. Fancy, Martha," to the Swede, "Gwyn has never seen a mummy since her childhood! Why, she has missed a great privilege—a joy I might say. But now we will open her eyes in wonderment—shall we not?"

"Dear Master," twittered Martha, "your niece cannot conceive the delight before her. And we shall enjoy her introduction to the presence of the great prince."

"Yes, yes, Martha," Uncle Saltus cried enthusiastically. "We shall delight in her unsophisticated pleasure."

As for me, I wished the Egyptian-mad throng and their mummies further. But I was in for it. No escape. I had simply to brace myself and go through with the frightful ordeal before me. The evening dragged along interminably. I stifled my yawns and glanced nervously at the bronze clock on the mantel. At last it struck twelve. It was like the knell of doom to me. But every one else rose with alacrity to follow my uncle to his museum.

This museum was situated on the upper floor of a huge tower quite medieval in appearance. As the party mounted the winding stairway, a keen flash of lightning cut across our vision, followed by a long, low rumble. Now, I have always been afraid of an electric storm, and the combination of thunder and mummies was almost too much for me. I gave a little scream and cowered in terror. In the dense darkness some one—a man—seized my hand in his and whispered: "Don't be frightened!" I could not tell who it was. I hope it was my cousin and not the horrible Justiniani whom I was really beginning to fear.

It was Martha Torgvald, carrying a lighted wax candle.

We entered the museum and Hafiz, who had preceded us, switched on the lights. I gazed around fearfully.

The great room was packed with Egyptian relics and curios. Models of temples and pyramids, huge sphinxes crouching everywhere staring with stony scrutiny. Tablets covered with hieroglyphics and strange prehistoric figures greeted my gaze. At a glance I realized the great value of the marvelous collection, but wished myself miles away. The lightning, flaring in, played across the uncanny Oriental faces with startling effect. I shivered with nervousness. "Really," I said to myself, "these hideous things remind me of Mrs. La Verne Cooper."

On a big table in the center of the room lay a huge sarcophagus. It was propped up so that the painted face of Rameses on its cover stared at us with great menacing eyes. "Why do you disturb me?" they seemed to ask. I was sick and cold with terror at the ominous glance.

But my uncle, rubbing his hands and purring with delight, led me straight up to the receptacle. "See, Gwyn," he chortled, "as Napoleon said to his men, forty centuries are looking down at you."

Fascinated, I gazed. The calm, haughty, intolerant eyes stared coldly at me. "He recognizes beauty," whispered a silky voice in my ear. It was Justiniani looking over my bare shoulder and his wicked, piratical eyes were more ominous than those of the dead Egyptian prince!

CHAPTER THREE

THE DEAD PRINCE

SLOWLY and carefully my uncle lifted the upper half of the painted coffin. A shapeless mass lay within covered by linen wrappings, a yellowish-brown tint from age. Every one save myself huddled closer to the table. I felt really sick and faint at the thought of what I was soon to see. Uncle Saltus' hands were trembling with eager anticipation, as with a pair of sharp scissors he cut away the linen bandages on either side the form. This was no small task as there were at least fifteen layers of these coverings. But at last he finished and, drawing a long breath, flung back the wrappings and revealed the mummy to

the waist. It was that of a man of parchment skin, with matted strands of tawny hair and beard. The eyes were closed, the lips firmly compressed as if to carry its secrets forever. The shriveled flesh had shrunk from the bones, leaving the ghastly, horrible form almost a skeleton. I repressed a shriek and caught at Miss Torgvald's arm for support. "Frightful!" I gasped. "Beautiful!" Uncle Saltus exclaimed. "Rameses, I salute you!"

All bent forward and scrutinized the dead man with greedy eyes. Little murmurs of delight rose from various members of the party. Only my cousin Mark and his friend preserved their cynical air. I heard Mark mutter: "I say, Jerry, we'll have to get a b. and s. to take the taste of this thing out of our mouths—what?" Mr. Sanborn nodded in assent.

Martha Torgvald was, I thought, absolutely disgusting in the fuss she made over the mummy. She peered at it and "oh'd" and "ah'd" until I could have slapped her. Uncle Saltus was delighted with her appreciation. He beamed and glowed and rubbed his hands ecstatically as he cried: "Gwyn, my dear, what do you think of it?"

"Oh, uncle," I returned in genuine distress, "I think it is awful—terrible. How can you bear to touch it?" For my uncle was pawing the mummy over now, feeling of its skin, handling it gently as he might some dainty trifle of great value.

Uncle Saltus was about to reply when the impassive Dr. Torgvald suddenly narrowed his eyes to sinister slits. "What is that, Dr. Erskine," he asked, "just under the arm?"

Again every one gaped afresh. My uncle, in great excitement, ejaculated: "An ornament of some kind! You know the jewels of value are always hidden in the armpit." With great pains he manipulated the brittle arm so as not to break it and carefully drew forth something which he held up to the light, blinking at it as if stupefied. Suddenly he let out a shout. "It is—it is!" he whooped; "at last—at last I have found it! The Bird-Headed Sphinx! Look, Torgvald—Justiniani—Martha—look! And here—here is the eye—yes, this is genuine; the princely jewel for which Egyptologists have sought in vain. Ah! what a triumph!" He was almost sobbing now with hysterical joy.

The others examined the jewel minutely. I watched their faces—the thievish glow in the Italian's eyes; the jealousy in Dr. Torgvald's icy face, the greed in Martha's jade orbs. "They are furious," I thought, "because he has found it—furious with envy."

However, they soon controlled their agitation and fell to congratulating Uncle Saltus on his great find. "Treasure indeed, my friend," cried Justiniani. "You are a favorite of the gods."

There was great excitement and tremendous talk and, after they had calmed down a bit, all adjourned to the dining-room where champagne was freely circulated in toasts to Rameses and Uncle Saltus. I was heartily glad when the whole pow-wow was over and I could escape to the quiet of my own room. It was, however, long before I could sleep. Over and over I re-lived the events of the day. Over and over a train of faces passed before me—the cold, calculating visage of the Scandinavian, the strange, jade eyes of his sister, the mocking smile of my cousin, the velvet, dusky eyes of Justiniani lit by unholy fires and the parchment face and grim, secretive lips of the dead Egyptian prince.

I rose from my troubled dreams at daylight. I bathed and dressed without ringing for my maid. I crept from my rooms and, descending the great stairway, reached a door which I knew must give upon the garden. To my amazement I found the door unlocked. "Some one is up before me," I thought. I stepped out upon the threshold and paused abruptly. Before me, his body toward the east, with his face bent on a prayer rug, knelt Hafiz absorbed in his devotions. His long, white robes were spread about him, a snowy turban concealed his head. I was about to retreat precipitately when he leaped to his feet and, turning, confronted me angrily. *And it was Hafiz, and yet not Hafiz!* A man who was dressed quite like my uncle's servant and yet much darker, with flat nose and thick lips. A vicious glare was in his eyes as he saw me, but almost instantly it disappeared and, veiling his glances with his broad, heavy lids, he humbly salaamed. "I—I—did not mean to disturb you," I faltered. "I thought it was Hafiz," I somewhat lamely concluded.

He lifted his lids and something positively devilish looked out at me for an instant. "No," he murmured softly, "I am not that offspring of a she-camel. I am Yussef, the servant of the illustrious Professor Justiniani."

"Oh, very well, Yussef," I rejoined. "I am going for a walk in the garden."

He stood aside to let me pass. I descended the steps and went toward the peristyle whose marble columns were flushing rosy in the light of the rising sun. The air was cool and delightfully welcome to my aching head. I sat down on a marble bench to inhale the odors from the rose garden close by. Idly I glanced back toward the house. Yussef was staring after me. His wicked eyes peering out from under the enveloping turban startled me by their intense gaze. When he saw me looking back at him he fell again to his devotions and once more began bumping his head against his prayer rug.

CHAPTER FOUR

A MIDNIGHT QUEST

I HAD hoped that the house party would break up now that the mummy had been unwrapped, but to my dismay I discovered the guests were to be there for several days longer. This arrangement, of course, dispelled my dreams of becoming really acquainted with my uncle. There was my cousin Mark, too. I wanted to know him better despite his cynicism and worldly air. I did not want him to believe me a mere fortune-hunter.

I did not like the Torgvalds, who struck me as a pair of schemers. And the Italian I fairly loathed. I kept out of his way and remained so closely in my rooms or walking by myself in the grounds, that at length Uncle Saltus remonstrated with me. "My dear Gwyn," he said, somewhat plaintively, "you seem determined to make a recluse of yourself. Why is this? Don't you like my friends?"

We were alone in the library as he asked this question. For one moment I was tempted to resort to subterfuge, but my better nature prevailed. I looked my uncle squarely in the face and replied: "No, Uncle Saltus, I don't like them."

"Dear, dear!" he exclaimed helplessly; "why, how is that? They all admire you so much. It was only this morning that Professor Justiniani was complimenting your beauty."

"I don't want his compliments," I said hotly.

"And Martha says you are a wonderful girl——"

"Martha is a cat!" I snapped.

"Gwyn—my child——"

"Well, she is, uncle. You will find I am right," I stubbornly returned. "I know you think I am horrid to speak so of your friends, but I must be honest."

Uncle Saltus scrutinized me for a moment as if searching my very heart. Suddenly he rose and, coming over to me, kissed me on the forehead tenderly. "Yes, Gwyn," he murmured, "be always honest in word, thought and deed. God bless me!" he added with a sigh, "how like your mother you are."

That night I could not sleep. I tossed and turned in my luxurious bed until my nerves were on edge. "If I had a book," I said at last, "I might read myself to sleep." I resolved to throw on a negligée and go down to the library to find a novel and sit up a while reading until I should become sleepy.

My uncle's rooms were quite near mine. They consisted of a reception-room or study, a sleeping-room and bath. I had visited them and knew how the furniture and appointments were arranged.

I had stepped out in the upper corridor and had my hand outstretched to switch on the light when, to my utter amazement, I saw a form at the extreme end of the long hall coming toward me. It was Martha Torgvald, carrying a lighted wax candle in her hand. She was stealthily creeping along, the light from her candle throwing her chalky face into full relief. In an instant I darted behind the heavy curtains of a deep window close by.

Martha came nearer and paused before the door leading to my uncle's study. Glancing about to see that she was quite alone, she took a key from her pocket, inserted it in the keyhole, opened the door and glided in, closing but not locking the door behind her.

Aghast I stood hesitating a moment. What should I do? I could not for one instant believe evil of my uncle—that fine old gentleman. No, the woman had gone there on some covert mission of her own. I resolved to follow her.

I stole after her, opened the door and crept softly in. Close by was a huge davenport piled high with cushions, well drawn out from the wall. I was behind it in a moment crouching low, scarcely breathing as I peered out at her. She was standing before a cabinet at the farther end of the room, a receptacle which I knew to be filled with Uncle Saltus' choicest and smallest curios. Cautiously she drew out drawer after drawer and examined the contents by the light of her candle. With her long blonde braids and her white face and burning, thievish eyes, she was a witch-like figure. "What is she looking for?" I asked myself over and over.

Whatever it was, she was disappointed as at last she turned away with a frown. For a minute or two she paused uncertainly and looked about the room as if undecided whether she would continue her search. Once she glanced toward the door of my uncle's sleeping-room as if considering an investigation there. But at last she evidently gave up her quest for she quietly crept past the davenport, so near me I could have seized her skirts, through the door, which she locked behind her. I heard her footfalls padding away along the corridor in the direction of her rooms.

"Well, what in the mischief does this mean?" I asked myself. Here I was locked in my uncle's study. Now the question arose, how was I to get out and back to my own room? The only way was through my uncle's bedchamber, the door of which was ajar. Suppose my uncle were to awaken and find me in his rooms? Could I make him believe I was not lying when I should explain my presence? Well," I argued, "I must make the attempt. There is no other way."

I stole softly on tip-toe to the bedroom door and stood listening for a moment. I could hear the slow, tranquil breathing of the sleeper. Plainly he was lost to the world. So, with throbbing pulses I pushed open the door and went into the room.

I paused a moment to see if Uncle Saltus had stirred. No, he was sleeping as sweetly as a tired child. Summoning all my courage I crossed the room and gently turned the key in the door. In another moment I had closed the door behind me and was flying to my room, thankful to gain it without encountering a belated servant.

I sat for some time in deep reflection. "What was that woman searching for?" I asked myself. "She is just what I believed her—a sneak—a crawling, slimy reptile! What shall I do? Tell Uncle Saltus? He will say I dreamed it."

I could not decide on my course of action then. I resolved to be guided by the events of the next day. There was where I made my fatal mistake. Had I told—but I must not get ahead of my story.

I fell into a heavy sleep toward dawn and did not waken until nearly noon when my maid roused me, bringing a tray. "Miss Burgoyne," she said, "it's so late I fetched up your breakfast."

Late that afternoon I was walking through a secluded part of the grounds. Suddenly, to my dismay, I realized my petticoat was loose and coming down. I looked about for a retreat in which to repair the damage. There was a tiny arbor close by overhung with heavy vines. Here I sought shelter. And none too soon. For I had scarcely reached my refuge when Dr. Torgvald and Martha came around a bend in the path and passed slowly by. I caught a fragment of their conversation—"Where could he have hidden it?" "The old rascal!" "He shall pay dearly"—then they were out of hearing.

I returned to the house more mystified than ever. There was something Uncle Saltus had concealed which the Scandinavians wanted. "He shall pay dearly," Dr. Torgvald had said. Pay dearly for what? I decided that I would go at once to my uncle and tell him all I had seen and heard. But as I was hurrying through the upper hall, I caught loud, angry voices from my uncle's study. "I protest—it's an outrage!" some one shouted in rage. Then Uncle Saltus' voice spoke mildly but sternly: "That will do! We will have no argument about this."

"It's damnable," cried the furious voice. "I won't submit to it."

"Silence!" thundered my uncle.

An absolute stillness fell.

I hastened to my room and locked the door. "Why, who could that have been?" I asked in consternation. "Some one trying to browbeat or threaten uncle? It would not have been one of the Torgvalds. What is going on here, I wonder?" But glancing at the clock, I saw it was late and I must put aside my conjectures and hasten to dress for dinner.

At the table I found an atmosphere of repression. My cousin Mark was sulky and his friend Mr. Sanborn lost in abstraction. The Torgvalds, too, appeared distrait, although Martha made a desperate effort to entertain Uncle Saltus. She fawned upon him and gave him her most ardent glances. "Oh, yes!" I thought to myself, "smirk

away, you feline. I wonder what my uncle would have said could he have seen you at two o'clock this morning prowling about his rooms."

As for Professor Justiniani, he too seemed absorbed in his own thoughts. Occasionally I caught him surveying Martha with a sly, malicious expression in his black eyes. In fact, it seemed to me that almost every one there was on guard against something. To add to the general joy, Yussef, who came to whisper in his master's ear during dinner, snarled so on passing Hafiz, who stood behind uncle's chair, that for a moment a row seemed imminent. But Hafiz looked at the Nubian with lofty contempt and, muttering some outlandish gibberish, turned haughtily away from the sneering Yussef. "Well," I ruminated, "what with Orientals and mummies and Moorish professors and Scandinavian cats, this is not what one might call a happy family."

As we left the dining-room, my uncle, joining me, said in an undertone: "Gwyn, I wish you would come to my study at nine o'clock. I wish to see you on an important matter."

The others did not hear this, as they were moving ahead of us. I was relieved, for I felt sure if any one there had caught an inkling of my uncle's request, we would be spied upon. I was fast coming to suspect every one in the party of some ulterior design.

My uncle excused himself at a quarter of nine, saying he would soon return. At two minutes of nine I rose and, making no excuse, took my way leisurely through the hall and up the stairs. I saw Yussef crossing the hall with his master's Arabic coffee on a tray, for the Italian would have his own coffee made in his own fashion. Yussef looked blackly at me. "He dislikes me because I broke up his prayer meeting," I laughed to myself.

I tapped on my uncle's door.

"Come in," he called. I obeyed.

He was sitting by a mahogany desk, writing. He laid down his pen and turned at my entrance. "Gwyn," he said quietly, "I wish to speak confidentially with you. We must not be interrupted. Lock the door, child."

CHAPTER FIVE

THE HORROR

WHEN I emerged from the study, a half-hour later, I was so dazed I scarcely could collect my scurrying senses. That which had passed between Uncle Saltus and myself is not to be told here. Only one thing I must state, and that is that the dear old man was perfectly willing I should send for Maggie to come as my maid, and gave me a check to cover her expenses. Just before I left him, he rang for Hafiz and ordered him to ask Dr. Torgvald to come up to the study.

I met the latter on the stairs. He bowed with his customary frigid courtesy. I went on down and rejoined the others. Martha Torgvald was on pins and needles. She fidgeted about, biting her lips and clasping and unclasping her nervous hands. I saw Professor Justiniani regarding her from the tail of his eye with ill-concealed satisfaction. Indeed, he seemed positively to revel in her palpable discomfiture.

Mark and Mr. Sanborn had taken themselves off to the billiard room on the third floor. So when Dr. Torgvald came rushing downstairs in a cold, white fury, there were only the Italian and I to witness his rage. "Come with me at once," he said to his sister. "We will begin to pack."

"What—what has happened?" Martha gasped.

"No matter," her brother curtly snapped. "We leave in the morning." He seized his sister's arm and rushed her up the stairs.

Justiniani looked at me and laughed with diabolic glee. "They get—what you call—the walking-papaire," he chuckled. "That is good! He—that Swede is a pompous ass. And his sistaire!" he shrugged his shoulders and spread his white hands abroad, "she is a serpent, si, si. I am very happy they are going." He rose and came over to the fire-place where I was sitting. "Now I have you all to myself, *la bella signorina*."

But happily at this moment Hafiz's tall figure in flowing, white raiment appeared on the great stairway. Justiniani looked up, startled, with a muttered imprecation of annoyance. Hafiz came on down and salaamed profoundly before the Italian.

"Will the illustrious effendi go to my master?" he murmured. "He desires to have speech with him."

Justiniani was fearfully upset—that was manifest. "Perhaps you will get the walking-papaire," I murmured as he started toward the stairs. He gave me a sidelong glance of somber suspicion, but followed Hafiz up the stairway, his head arrogantly erect.

I sat for some time gazing in the fire-light, wondering what was transpiring in Uncle Saltus' study. At last, roused by footsteps on the stairs, I looked up to see Mark Erskine and his friend descending. "Why, where is everybody?" asked my cousin as he came toward me.

"Professor Justiniani is with uncle," I replied, "and the Torgvalds have gone to their rooms." I vouchsafed no further information.

Mark seated himself and stretched out his long legs to the blazing fire. "I wonder," he said sourly, "how much longer we've got to endure this collection of freaks? They're worse than mummies."

Although this was precisely my opinion, I did not think it quite wise to coincide. So I kept still. Mr. Sanborn spoke at once. "I wish, Mark," he said abruptly, "that you had the authority to clean out the augean stable. I think you would make short work of these cattle."

His tone was so surly, I wondered if he included me among the herd. Still I said nothing. And just then we heard uncle's voice as he came along the upper hall with the Italian. He was laughing and chatting amicably with the latter and they descended the stairs arm in arm, apparently on the best of terms. It was evident that Justiniani had not received his "walking-papaire."

I soon excused myself and went to my room.

The wind had risen and was sweeping in from the sea in violent gusts. It shouted and roared around the towers of Osirus House with the voices of a million demons. There was something ominous in the challenge of the terrific blast. Doors banged and shutters rattled. I made haste to secure the windows, but even after everything was closed, I could still hear the shrieks of the angry wind and the menacing dash of the waves on the rocks below the garden walls. "It's a good night to be sheltered," I thought as I sank into my delicious bed. "God help all who are abroad to-night." I lay long listening to the mysterious voices of the night living over and over my interview with my uncle, recalling all he had said to me. At last I fell asleep.

I was suddenly awakened by the continued banging of a shutter in the hall just outside my door. I hated des-

perately to get up, but I knew I could not go to sleep while that disturbance lasted. So rising, I threw on a kimona and stepped out into the hall. I soon located the sound. It was outside the window behind whose draperies I had concealed myself to watch Martha Torgvald. I had just reached this window—in fact, had my hands extended to raise it when I caught a faint sound. I instantly paused, wheeled and peered out into the hall. A form was discernible before Uncle Saltus' door. My heart thumped like a drum. Was Martha returning to her search? Even as this question darted through my mind I saw the figure rush across the hall and quickly enter Professor Justiniani's door, which was obliquely across from the door to my uncle's study. "So the Moor is abroad," I muttered to myself. "He may have had a late appointment with uncle. They seemed on excellent terms." I was just about to turn to the banging shutter again when at the extreme end of the corridor I saw a movement. Some one else was stirring about.

Motionless as a statue I stood, well hidden behind the heavy curtains. Some one—I could not tell whether man or woman—came stealthily up the hall. As the person came nearer a sudden panic seemed to ensue. Whoever it was suddenly turned and flew back down the hall to the wing in which the Torgvalds were lodged. Almost directly I heard footsteps on the main stairway. Two men came up and paused at the head. "Good-night," I heard one say, to which the other muttered something. One man went toward the wing of which I have just spoken, the other came on and, passing the window where I was concealed, opened a door farther down the other end of the hall and disappeared. Although I could not see his face in the darkness, I knew it must be Mr. Sanborn, as Mark Erskine's rooms were next to Uncle Saltus' suite. Evidently the two had remained below long after every one else had retired.

I fastened the shutter in the face of a furious gale clawing and struggling to tear it from my hold. I returned to my room, switched on the light and looked at the clock. It was a quarter of two.

Next morning a veritable sheet of rain dashed against the window and the waves raced and shouted on the rocks. The wrack and tempest drove in from the sea in indescribable fury. As we straggled into the breakfast-room every one's face reflected the gloom of the morning. "Beastly day!" growled Mark as he mixed himself a stiff drink at the sideboard. "And what a night! I never slept a wink."

I saw his friend, Mr. Sanborn, look sharply at him as he tossed off his brandy and soda. Dr. Torgvald and Martha came in garbed for traveling. Mark surveyed them impertinently. "Not a very nice morning for your start," he said with studied insolence. I wondered how he knew they were going. Perhaps, I reflected, the Italian may have told him. Dr. Torgvald surveyed Mark with narrowed eyes in which burned angry points of fire. Martha's pale face flushed scarlet, but she said nothing.

Now Justiniani came swaggering in. He swept the party with one mocking glance. "Beautiful weather," he cried. "Cannot we arrange one of your American picnics on the shore to-day?" Every one simply glared at him. We were about to take our seats when suddenly I asked: "Where is uncle?"

"The old boy's late," cried Mark boisterously. "I say, won't I nag him? He's always preaching the delights of early rising to me."

Scarcely had he uttered the words when a frightful clamor arose in the house. Screams and shouts were mingled in dreadful confusion. "What in the devil——" began Mark, but he never finished the question, for suddenly Hafiz burst into the room in a frenzy. "My master—my master," he shouted, his dark eyes rolling, his teeth chattering in terror.

"What is it?" cried Mr. Sanborn, seizing the frantic man by the arm.

"He is dead—dead," Hafiz groaned.

"Dead!" Every one screamed.

"Yes—yes," the man gasped. "Dead—killed."

"Killed?" It was one voice that spoke—the voice of Mr. Sanborn. "How do you know he is killed?" he demanded.

"The knife—the knife," Hafiz panted. "Come, come."

We were all at my uncle's door now, where was huddled a group of wailing servants. It was Mr. Sanborn who pushed them out of his way and went in first, followed by the rest.

In a terribly disordered room, as if there had been a dreadful struggle, my poor uncle lay on his bed quite dead with a knife driven home in his kindly, gentle old heart.

CHAPTER SIX

AN UNEXPECTED FRIEND

DURING the appalling excitement and uproar that followed, only one figure stood out distinctly in the phantasmagoria of sight and sound—that of Gerald Sanborn. He at once assumed charge and, ordering every one to be quiet, carefully examined Uncle Saltus' body. "Yes," he said finally, "Dr. Erskine has been murdered. I ask you, Dr. Torgvald," turning to the ashen-faced man, "and Miss Torgvald and Professor Justiniani to leave the room. Hafiz," sternly, "tell those servants to stop their noise."

"Are you the master here?" demanded Dr. Torgvald, getting ugly. "Why should you order us about—the friends of Dr. Erskine."

"Yes, why?" demanded Professor Justiniani. "We do not recognize your authority, sir."

"I am acting for Mr. Mark Erskine," came the calm reply, "and for this young lady," indicating me as I stood shivering with fright and silently weeping.

I looked at him in amazement. His keen, compelling gray eyes met mine squarely. They seemed to say, "Trust me." Mr. Sanborn at that moment seemed a tower of strength beside poor, foolish Mark, babbling incoherently and lamenting in semi-maudlin fashion. My cousin managed to gasp out, "That's right, Jerry, speak for me. Tell them all to go."

"And you, Miss Burgoyne," said Justiniani in his wheedling voice, "does this man represent your wishes?"

I had not the remotest idea who Mr. Sanborn was. Indeed, he had been more or less of a mystery to me ever since my arrival. But now, in my stress, I gazed at his impassive face anxiously. He was a man, strong, dependable. There must be some one to command. Mark was in no condition, and I could not trust any of the others. I drew a long breath. "Yes," I said, "he does."

"Thank you, Miss Burgoyne," Mr. Sanborn said quietly. "And now, all go!" He advanced threateningly upon the reluctant trio. They surrendered and sullenly withdrew. Mr. Sanborn then turned to me. "Do not give way," he said very gently. I started. It was the same voice that

had said, "Don't be frightened," on the tower stairs the night we had gone to witness the unwrapping of the mummy when the lightning had so alarmed me. Was it possible that this man of granite face and cold, inscrutable eyes had a kindly side? I looked up at him through my tears. "It's—it's—so awful," I sobbed. "He was so good to me—the first person who had ever been good since—since my parents died." A fresh burst of weeping followed.

Mr. Sanborn did not speak, but led me out into the study to a chair. "Miss Burgoyne," he said, "will you permit me to advise you?"

"Yes," I murmured, trying to restrain my grief.

"I want you to go to your room and have a servant bring you some coffee," he said. "This is really for your good. You should not be here now. It will be only a short time before the coroner and police will arrive, and all the terrible details will have to be adjusted. Mark will pull himself together shortly, and I have Hafiz to help me. Now, I beg you will do as I ask. Will you?"

I looked up into the steely eyes, softened now by a strange expression. I rose unsteadily. "Yes, Mr. Sanborn, I will go," I said.

He went to the door with me and paused a moment, laying his hand on the knob. "Just one word more," he said in a low voice. "Don't talk, or see any of that—that bunch," he nodded toward the stairs, "until I give you permission. Believe me, this is for the best."

"I shall be only too glad to avoid them," I said. "But they, that is the Torgvalds, are leaving this morning."

"Mr. Sanborn smiled a grim, inscrutable smile. "I don't think they will go," he said calmly. "That is, not this morning. Now try to compose yourself, and when the physician whom I shall summon comes, I will have him give you something so that you can rest and forget this horror for a while."

I went to my room and rang for a maid. The girl was as terrified as the rest of the household, but retained sufficient composure to bring me some coffee. After drinking it I threw myself on my couch and lay in a semi-stupor for some time. I was conscious that much was transpiring. Above the rage of the wind and the dash of the rain I could hear the continuous ring of the phone, the whir of automobiles, the tramp of heavy feet on the stairs and along the upper hall, the sound of men's voices in quick, sharp interrogations and answers. I realized that the officers had arrived and were conducting a preliminary investigation. At length there was a soft tap on the door. "Come in," I languidly called.

The door opened. I caught a glimpse of Mr. Sanborn, who was ushering in a man of middle-age who carried a bag. "Dr. Nolan, Miss Burgoyne," he said and closed the door behind the physician, who came to the couch, sat down, felt my pulse, and shook his head slightly. "Dreadful shock!" he said sympathetically. "Heart action a little feeble. You must keep very quiet for a few days. Above all, don't talk of this terrible affair," he ordered, "any more than is positively imperative. The inquest will be held to-morrow and I think you should keep to your room to-day."

"How is my Cousin Mark?" I asked.

"He's getting hold of himself," returned Dr. Nolan, as he poured some drops in a glass of water. "He had been drinking all night and was shot all to pieces, but is coming to himself now. Too bad you haven't some woman friend with you, Miss Burgoyne."

"If my good Maggie were here——" I began.

"Who is Maggie?" the doctor asked, as he gave me the medicine. I told him about the girl and that Uncle Saltus had given me permission to send for her."

"Well, now, I'll speak to Sanborn," the physician replied, "and he will send for her at once. It's very fortunate he chanced to be here, isn't it?"

"Yes," I said. "He seems so capable and so like a rock."

"Well, he's a very remarkable man, you know," responded Dr. Nolan.

"I don't know," I replied. "I haven't the slightest idea who he is, only that he is a friend of my Cousin Mark."

Dr. Nolan regarded me curiously. "Do you mean to tell me," he asked incredulously, "that you don't know who Gerald Sanborn is?"

"I haven't the remotest idea," I replied. "Who is he?"

"The most brilliant and brainy detective in all New York," he tersely said.

"Detective?" I gasped, raising myself on one arm and staring at the doctor. "Why—why—how under the heavens did he come here?"

"Well, I don't know that it is any harm to enlighten you," the physician answered, sitting down again by the couch. "I am only surprised that you haven't learned the truth from your uncle."

"Probably he did not think to tell me," I replied.

"Very likely. It was this way. Your Cousin Mark got into a dreadful mess with a blackmailer—a woman—and Sanborn got him out of it. Your uncle was so grateful that he invited Sanborn to spend his vacation here. And I tell you that he's the right man now, for if any one can ferret out the mystery of your uncle's murder he is the chap. He's one of the greatest crime investigators of the day. Now, Miss Burgoyne, I'll see you again this evening. You will probably have to testify at the inquest."

"Oh, doctor!" the dismayed cry broke from my lips. "Why?"

"Every one will be called to see if any light can be thrown on this awful affair," Dr. Nolan said gravely.

"But—but," I faltered, "I have no idea who killed my uncle."

"Of course not," the physician rejoined. "Still, the coroner will wish to question you with the others. That is the law, Miss Burgoyne. Now, good-by. I hope I shall find your nerves in better shape to-night."

The doctor had gone and I lay deeply considering this surprising development. I had always fancied that a detective must of necessity be a rather coarse, rough person. But although Mr. Sanborn had impressed me as a cold, reticent man, I could not consider him otherwise than a gentleman in looks, manner and dress. "This is why he appeared so mysterious," I reflected. "He seemed different—aloof as it were. I thought him rather contemptuous of the others. Perhaps he was," recalling that he had dubbed them "cattle." "I wonder—I wonder," I went on, "whom he suspects and what his theory is? I wish I knew. But I fancy no one could ever get at the real man or his inmost thoughts. Well, he certainly was very kind to me. I must thank him when I see him."

I fell asleep soon after. Hours later, I awakened at a sound in the room. The maid was there with a dinner tray. "Miss Burgoyne, a note." She handed it to me.

I opened and read:

"DEAR MISS BURGOYNE:

"Please see me a few minutes after you have dined.

"Yours faithfully,

"GERALD SANBORN."

I had risen and was sitting by the table wrapped in a voluminous dressing robe. The maid ushered Mr. Sanborn in. He came forward and took my hand in his. "Are you feeling better?" he asked solicitously.

"Yes, indeed," I said, "thanks to your kind thoughtfulness."

"And now," he said, as he drew up a chair and seated himself, "let us have a brief talk. Dr. Nolan told you who I am?"

"Yes," I said. "I was so surprised. You had indeed been a mystery to me, but I had never dreamed you were a——" I paused uncertainly.

"A detective?" he finished with a slow smile. "You must not fear me, though, Miss Burgoyne. I am not as formidable as you may think."

CHAPTER SEVEN

FRESH HORROR

"DO you feel strong enough to answer a few questions?" Mr. Sanborn went on.

"Yes," I said slowly. What was he going to ask me?

"Miss Burgoyne, I have been assigned by the New York office to take charge of the investigation of this case. I ask you now to co-operate with me. If you have knowledge of anything—detail, even—that may appear insignificant to you, it is your duty to inform me."

For a moment I hesitated. I thought of all my uncle had said to me the night before. Was it my duty to tell every word? I raised my lids and studied the face on the other side of the table. It had strangely softened and the piercing, gray eyes had an expression I had never seen before. Could I trust him absolutely? And while I hesitated the strangest thing happened. There came on my shoulder a touch as light as thistledown and a voice seemed to whisper in my ear, "Tell him everything." I started violently and looked over my shoulder.

"Why—why——" I stammered, "who spoke to me?"

"No one, Miss Burgoyne," said Mr. Sanborn, who was intently watching me now with barricaded eyes.

"You—you will laugh at me," I faltered, "but I could have sworn that my uncle stood behind me and whispered to me."

"No, I shall not laugh at you," rejoined the detective. "There are stranger things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in material philosophy. I don't mind telling you that I am greatly interested in psychic forces. Your uncle may not be so far away after all, and if he wants to help, why should you hesitate?"

"Mr. Sanborn," I said earnestly, "I do want to throw all the light possible on this terrible affair. I hesitated from one motive—that possibly I should not betray my poor uncle's confidence, that's all. But before I speak, tell me one thing. Do these foreigners—these Scandinavians and this Italian—know that you are a detective?"

"No," he quickly replied. "Your uncle introduced me merely as the friend of your cousin. But I shall not be able to keep my identity a secret much longer, for they will know when I interrogate them, as of course I must. I believe, Miss Burgoyne, that you can give me a lead in this investigation. As yet I have no definite theory—only vague surmises. I suspect no one—and every one—save you."

"I am glad you except me," I answered. "Why should you suspect Mark? He was very fond of Uncle Saltus."

"Yes; but, Miss Burgoyne, Mark had been drinking all night. He started in at dinner, and when he is in liquor he is not responsible. That was why I kept him up in the billiard room nearly all the evening. I did not want him to disgrace himself before your uncle's guests, and especially before you. I took him out for a walk, hoping the fresh sea gale might help straighten him up. He did seem better when we came in, very late—about two o'clock. But you saw what a condition he was in this morning. He drank steadily the rest of the night. His rooms adjoined your uncle's. Then he has been very bitter at Dr. Erskine for several days. Your uncle told him only three or four days ago that he had made a new will and that he should leave him only an annuity. They had high words——"

When I regained consciousness, Maggie was holding salts to my nose.

"Oh, then it was Mark whom I heard in uncle's rooms?" I involuntarily cried.

"You heard the quarrel?" the detective questioned.

"Only loud voices, and some one cried out that it was an outrage and that he would not submit to it," I replied.

"Exactly. And what you heard others may have heard. Mark has brooded over the matter ever since. He may have had a brain storm," Mr. Sanborn replied frostily, "and, in a moment of rage, augmented by whisky, have——" He did not finish the sentence.

"I can scarcely believe that," I said. "Nor will you, I fancy, after I tell you everything."

I began with my discovery of Martha Torgvald's midnight visit to my uncle's rooms. I told Mr. Sanborn of the snatches of conversation I had caught as the brother and sister passed my hiding-place in the arbor. Mr. Sanborn did not speak, but his eyes never left my face. Then I repeated all that passed between my uncle and myself in our last interview, and wound up by describing the events in the upper hall, just before he and Mark had come up to their rooms.

"Of course, you have not yet done as your uncle directed?" the detective tentatively asked after I had finished my recital.

"Not yet," I responded. "There has been no chance."

"Does any one know?" he questioned.

"No."

Mr. Sanborn sat in absolute silence for some time, looking at the table with brooding eyes. "Of course," he said at last, "your telling Dr. Erskine of the Torgvald woman's prowling was what decided him to suggest to those people that they cut their visit short."

"Very likely," I replied. "But you can see for yourself that uncle had not been imposed upon by Martha Torgvald in spite of her clever acting. He realized that she was trying to lead him to an offer of marriage. Uncle Saltus was no fool, even if he had a child-like heart."

"No," agreed Mr. Sanborn, "he evidently saw through her schemes. And why not? It was palpable enough to the rest of us that she was trying to entrap him. Mark saw red whenever he spoke of it. Well, Miss Burgoyne, you have surely given me food for thought. I did not dream I should discover so much from a talk with you. Now I want to warn you. When you testify at the inquest, answer only the interrogations put to you. The coroner is a deadly dull fellow and will undoubtedly ask only the most stereotyped questions. Don't volunteer a word. If you should tell what you have disclosed to me it would put the murderer on guard. Let me work this problem out along my own lines. Another point: you must be very careful of your own safety. There are three of my men in the house now, and some one of us will be here for several days. I shall myself stay for a week. My rooms are next yours. But we are dealing with no ordinary criminal. I want you to have your maid sleep here in this room, and I'm going to have a bell put in your bedroom which will ring in mine, so that if you are alarmed you can at once rouse me. Thank you for your aid." With one swift, untranslatable smile, Mr. Sanborn departed. I was greatly relieved that some one of judgment and reliability knew all that I had locked in my heart. I had feared I scarcely knew what. But now I felt I had a strong, powerful friend on whom I could rely for both advice and protection.

The day dragged by. I saw no one only the maid. "You will sleep here to-night, Estelle," I said, "and until Maggie comes." The girl was pleased at the plan and perfected her arrangements as fast as possible.

That night we locked and bolted the door and windows. Mr. Sanborn came about nine o'clock and tapped on the door. "To-morrow," he whispered, "an electrician will install the alarm bell I spoke of. There is no danger at present, for one of my men will be on guard in this upper hall all night. I shall be in the lower hall with another man. Mark is sleeping heavily. The Torgvalds are shut in their rooms and the Italian is below smoking. He was the only one who dined with me. Good-night."

The inquest was an absolutely perfunctory affair. Dr. Nolan testified to the death from a knife wound in the heart. Hafiz described the discovery of his master's body when he went in to wake him. No one could identify the knife—an ordinary weapon. The guests could throw no light on the mystery. Poor Mark, shaky and upset, had no theory. As for myself, the coroner appeared anxious to spare me in every way. The ordeal was quickly over. Nothing definite had been elicited and, after a brief deliberation, the jury returned the customary verdict that "Dr. Saltus Erskine came to his death at the hand or hands of persons unknown."

It was nightfall when the deliberations were concluded. Mark had arranged that the funeral should take place the next day. Professor Justiniani proclaimed that he should remain for the obsequies of his beloved friend. The Torgvalds also signified their intention of staying until the rites were over.

Late that evening Maggie arrived, bag and baggage. She took me in her arms and wept over me, commending me anew to the notice of the celestial hierarchy. The fact of a murder was something to give her all sorts of terrors. She groaned and prayed alternately, but was glad I had sent for her. "Shure, 'tis me place, darlint," she sobbed, "to be wid yez in your troubles. 'Tis ready I am to protect yez from these murtherin divils. As for your poor ould uncle—God rest his soul!—his murther will out in toime. 'Tis the promise of our Lord thot all thot is hidden shall be revealed."

That night I slept heavily. The newly installed bell was close by my bed, my faithful Maggie was lying on a couch in the next room. And outside in the hall at the head of the stairway sat a big, burly officer, an automatic in his hip-pocket.

And yet, despite all Mr. Sanborn's precautions to protect not only me but the entire household, Professor Justiniani was found the next morning dead in his bed, the mark of cruel, strangling fingers on his throat!

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE FACE AT THE WINDOW

I REALLY don't know how we lived through the next few days. As I look back now it was a hideous nightmare—the coming and going of officers, detectives and newspaper men; the second inquest; the removal of Professor Justiniani's body; my uncle's funeral and the reading of his will by his lawyer, whereby I found myself the heiress of his great fortune, including his valuable Oriental collection, poor Mark being cut off with an annuity of one hundred a month! This was one of the secrets which Uncle Saltus had revealed to me the night he was murdered, one of those which sent me dazed and bewildered from his room. Although I had boasted to that dreadful Mrs. La Verne Cooper that I was to be my uncle's heiress, it had only been in a spirit of bravado. So, when the dear old man had disclosed to me the terms of his will, I was absolutely stupefied. I had remonstrated feebly, I fear, "What will Mark do?" I had asked. "He, of course, expects to inherit your property."

"I will leave Mark enough so that he won't suffer," my uncle had replied. "It will do him good, my dear, to work for his living as you have done. Should he mend his ways, I know that in time, when you are convinced of his reformation, you will do whatever is just and right. Your mother's daughter would do no less."

Of course Mark was furious. He burst into an awful tirade when the will was read, cursing his dead uncle and denouncing me as having come between him and his rights. "Shut up, Mark," Mr. Sanborn, whom Mark had asked to be present at the reading of the will, had said sternly, "you have only yourself to blame. Had you behaved yourself, your uncle would not have cut you off."

"Oh, the deuce!" bawled Mark. "Don't you butt in, Jerry. You little sneak," he came threateningly toward me, his hand upraised, as if to strike me, "I'll pay you, you upstart!" The detective caught his wrist and twisted it until Mark groaned in agony. It was a frightful scene and made me physically ill. Indeed, shock after shock and sensation after sensation coming so rapidly had by this time nearly finished me. Mark at once rushed off to New York, vowing he should begin proceedings to contest the will. The Torgvalds had gone ere this—indeed, they departed just after the reading of the will. Mr. Sanborn and two of his men remained at Osirus House, as now the former had a double task on his hands.

I breathed more freely when I saw the car carrying the Torgvalds roll down the driveway to the gates. I bade the brother and sister good-by in the hall, and I knew I should not soon forget the malevolent glances they gave me as they coldly bowed in farewell. Martha Torgvald's jade eyes glittered like a snake's as she congratulated me on my good fortune, while her brother's livid face bore a look which made me shudder as I recalled it.

"Faugh!" said Mr. Sanborn as they went down the steps to their waiting car, "the air seems more wholesome now

That woman gives me the creeps. I'm very glad they're gone—for many reasons," he added.

Hafiz had attached himself to me like a faithful dog. If I strolled in the grounds he followed me. He stood behind my chair at dinner and allowed no one to serve me but himself. "It was my master's command," he said when I spoke to him about his devotion. "Hafiz will obey to the uttermost."

"Thot nagur sleeps outside your dure," Maggie informed me one morning.

"Hafiz?"

"He gets up early and goes away so you won't be seein' him," she replied. "But he doesn't go far. He's hangin' 'round in the corners kapin' his eye cocked toward your dure. What's he after fearin', Miss Gwyneth?"

"Oh, he doesn't fear anything, Maggie," I answered lightly, although in my heart I realized I was deceiving her. "He merely does as he thinks Uncle Saltus would wish."

What did Hafiz fear? This was the question I often asked myself. *And what did he know?* I often caught his enigmatic eyes fastened on me with a strange expression. All the mystery of the East seemed to look at me from those dusky orbs. Once I asked Mr. Sanborn. "Hafiz," he said slowly as if ruminating, "is an unknown quantity. Those Orientals cannot be fathomed by any occidental mind. The wisdom of the ages lies behind their sphinx gaze. Sometimes I fancy that Hafiz holds the key to the whole mystery. Still, he was apparently devoted to Dr. Erskine and sincere in his grief." He rose abruptly and walked away from me, his hands clasped behind him, his head bent as if in a profound study.

Yussef, Justiniani's servant, remained behind a day to pack up his master's effects and ship them to Italy. Then he left. I was looking out my window as he went down the path to the entrance of the grounds. Suddenly Hafiz stood in his way. I had seen nothing of my servant about but there he was, as if he had risen from the earth. He said something to the Nubian, who spat derisively upon the ground, stalked defiantly past Hafiz and, turning, shook a clenched fist in furious imprecation at the house.

That day Hafiz disappeared! No one had the slightest suspicion he was going; no one had seen him depart. I was quite upset over his defection, but Mr. Sanborn only laughed. "If that isn't an Oriental all over," he said. "Professing the utmost devotion and then calmly taking leave without a word. Ungrateful beggar!"

But next evening a small boy brought a note addressed to me. It had been given him at the station, he said, by a dark man who got off the train and directly reboarded it. The note was as follows:

"TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS LADY AT OSIRUS HOUSE:

"Thy servant will return. He trails the jackal of the desert. When the hour of danger strikes, Hafiz will be at thy side."

That was all. I showed the letter at once to Mr. Sanborn who whistled softly as he read it. "So Hafiz is on the job!" he said whimsically. "Who is the jackal, Miss Burgoyne?"

"I don't know," I replied, "unless it is Yussef. There was no love between the two."

"It is either Yussef—or——" the detective paused and looked steadily at me.

"Or whom?" I questioned.

We were sitting in the library before a glowing fire. The night was chill and calm. The only sound which broke the silence of the countryside was the loud roar of the surf as it broke on the rocks. Mr. Sanborn was smoking and gazing at the bed of glowing coals. Suddenly he flung his cigarette in the fire and turned to me with an air of finality. "Miss Burgoyne," he said, "you are a remarkable woman. You have given me a free hand; have never asked a question about my work in this affair; have not hampered me in any fashion. I have been spending your money like a drunken sailor. I think it's high time that I report to you on my progress. What do you say?"

"I scarcely know how to reply," I answered. "I have left the affair in your hands and have told you to spare no money in your search. I am satisfied that you are doing everything possible to find the murderer. But I shall be glad if you care to tell me how far you have progressed."

"Well, not as far as I could wish," returned the detective. "Still I am convinced that we are advancing. I should like to talk it all over with you and see how our discoveries appear to your woman's intuition. "For," he added, "I am a profound believer in that quality. Women of brains—of imagination—will often leap to a correct solution where a man will arrive only by a slow and laborious process of reasoning. So, then, I am going to tell you all that we have done up to date." He rose, opened his cigarette case and, selecting a cigarette, struck a match and bent forward to light it. In the meantime I also rose and went over to the great French window giving on the driveway, purposing to close the shutters against the night, as the servants had overlooked this task, presumably not wishing to disturb us in our conference.

I recoiled instantly. For just outside the window a figure was standing. I caught only a glimpse of a face with dreadful, staring eyes, gazing intently at me. Some way the awful face of Rameses, upstairs in the museum, darted across my consciousness. As I cried out in terror, the figure disappeared in the shrubbery.

Gerald Sanborn leaped to my side. "What is it—Gwyn—Miss Burgoyne?" he demanded and, as I reeled back, caught me on his strong arm.

"The face—the awful face, Jerry," I panted. "Looking straight at me—the face—of the mummy—of Rameses himself——!" Then I knew no more.

CHAPTER NINE

BY COMMAND OF THE DEAD.

WHEN I regained consciousness Maggie was holding salts to my nose. Mr. Sanborn was bending solicitously over me and the butler was in the offing holding a tray containing brandy and water. "What is the matter?" I feebly asked.

"You have been trying to frighten us to death," laughed Mr. Sanborn. "Are you all right now?"

As I slowly recalled the memory of the hideous face that had terrified me, I remembered also the ring of Mr. Sanborn's voice as he had called me "Gwyn"; remembered that I had called him "Jerry" in response. A flood of scarlet bathed my face as I suddenly realized that this man was fond of me, and that I was returning his regard. I could not meet his eyes—usually so cold and inexorable, now burning with affection. Putting my arm about Maggie's neck, I directed her to help me to a chair. As she obeyed, one of Mr. Sanborn's men knocked at the library door. "We've searched the grounds," he said, "but who ever it was has made a clean getaway. Shannon has gone over to the station to see if any one is hanging around there."

"You are in no condition to talk over matters to-night," Mr. Sanborn said. "Maggie, get your young lady to bed at once."

Some way it seemed very satisfactory to have this big, strong man decide for me. I went obediently to my room, Mr. Sanborn accompanying Maggie and myself to my door. "I shall go to New York early," he said as I bade him good-night, "but will return to-morrow night. Take care of yourself." He pressed my hand and swung back down the hall.

"Shure, 'tis the foine young man he is," stated Maggie. "An' glory be, Miss Gwyneth, he was thot upset over

your faint. 'Is she dead?' sez he in a voice thot'd curdle your blood. 'No, indade,' sez I. 'God be thanked!' sez he. An'——"

"Never mind, Maggie," I said wearily, "just help me into bed. There's a good girl."

I lay for some time thinking deeply. The danger of which my uncle had warned me was lurking near. I recalled all he had said and his minute instructions. If only Hafiz had not gone away! He might have helped me, I thought. I could not ask Mr. Sanborn to do what my uncle had commanded. In the first place, I was to maintain secrecy—to "trust no one," he had directed. In my heart I was fast coming to believe I could trust Gerald Sanborn in every contingency, but I had not yet reached the point where I could ignore my uncle's wishes. "If Maggie were not so excitable and talkative," I said to myself, "but there's no use of thinking of her. How am I to get rid of her?"

For hours I lay planning. At last I had all the details of action outlined. I trembled at what lay before me, but I knew I must keep my promise to the dead.

The next day passed without developments of any kind until evening, when I received a wire from Mr. Sanborn, saying he was detained and could not get back until the following morning. This was a depressing piece of news. I suddenly awoke to the fact that I was becoming dependent on Jerry Sanborn's society, for I cannot say happiness, but rather contentment. Then, too, I felt so safe when he was near. To be sure, there were two of his men in the house, one relieving the other through the night, so I argued I could not be in actual peril. Then I thought of my uncle's dreadful fate and Justiniani's murder and asked myself what chance I had.

I told Maggie that she might sleep in her own room that night instead of on my divan. She demurred at first, but finally yielded. The poor girl really needed one good night's sleep. With many prayers for my safety, she left me. My heart sank within me as she closed the door behind her. I felt absolutely alone in the world.

The clock on my mantel chimed twelve. I rose, threw on my negligée, took from my trunk the package my uncle had given me and, unlocking the door, went out in the hall.

At the head of the stairs, in a huge chair, reclined Shannon, the detective. His broad back was toward me, and he was stealing a nap judging from certain startling noises proceeding from his nose. Fortunately my way lay in another direction. I had provided myself with a tiny search-light of which I had yet no need.

I went noiselessly past various doors and stairways leading to the rear of Osirus House. My heart was pounding with nervousness and my head pained me frightfully. Still I persisted. "I must do it—I must," I prodded my flagging sense; "there is no other way."

Before me yawned the black, circular stairway leading to the museum. For there was where I was going—alone, at midnight to carry out a solemn pledge made to the dead. Step by step, guided by my tiny search-light, I mounted the stairs, the perspiration gathering on my forehead, my whole being shaken by fear—fear of the dreadful, impassive faces, the stony, fatalistic gaze of the sphinxes in the silent room; fear of the awful, painted countenance upon the coffin lid, of the more terrible face within. "Oh, God! oh, God!" I panted as I reached the top step of the stairway, "help me through with this."

I entered the great room, filled with somber and fantastic shadows and with huge, menacing shapes. I recalled that the electric switch was quite near the sarcophagus of Rameses. Turning my little searchlight this way and that, I finally located the mummy's coffin. But such a horror of this charnel-house suddenly came over me, I could have shrieked aloud. I cannot—I cannot," I gasped. And then "I must—I must."

Slowly, painfully I dragged myself toward it—that awful, huge pile still up-tilted on the table—shuddering at thought of the face I must soon encounter. Now I was approaching it, nearer and nearer, step by step, when suddenly my heart stopped beating and my dry tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. *For the sarcophagus was slowly moving as if the dead man within were coming forth.*

I could not stir, I could not scream, I could not breathe. I stared at it fascinated—hypnotized—unwilling to believe the evidence of my own eyes. Yes, there was no mistake—and *it was rising now as if about to walk toward me!*

My searchlight clattered to the floor from my nerveless fingers. The sound it made startled me from my lethargy. I gave one terrible cry that swept through every corridor of Osirus House. And even as I screamed, something leaped from behind the coffin of Rameses and hurled itself upon me, clutching my throat. I gave myself up for lost.

Then from somewhere behind me came a rush and another figure plunged upon us. It tore at the thing assailing me. The two shapes staggered and struggled and fought, smashing into glass cases, knocking down statues, spreading havoc and destruction all over the place.

Far, far below I heard shouts, a terrific crash of splintering wood and then running steps. Up the stairs came flying feet. Men burst into the museum—men who switched on lights and fired revolvers at the two swaying figures panting and growling and snarling like beasts, their garments in shreds, half-naked and mad with the lust for blood.

In all the infernal, awful scene I saw only one face—that of Gerald Sanborn. He came plunging toward me, firing at the two fighters as he ran. He was white as death, his eyes were blazing with heroic excitement.

"Are you hurt?" he panted as he caught me in his arms and held me to his breast as if he would never let me go.

And even as he reached me a shot from his automatic struck one figure. It staggered, groping hideously at the air with clutching fingers, then toppled and sprawled in a grotesque heap upon the floor. The other towered over it, his face like that of an avenging demon.

"Allah! Allah! Allah!" he shouted. "Said I not when danger was near I should return? It was Hafiz!

CHAPTER TEN

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

A LONG blank succeeded. In my delirium I was always begging for mercy from titanic, stony-faced figures; always struggling desperately with sinister shapes.

At length I began faintly to notice Maggie's honest, red face and another, gentle and sweet, crowned with a snowy cap. Occasionally a bearded face would drift for a moment or two before me and I would hear a man's voice giving directions about medicines, food and drink.

I realized I was very ill and that these people were trying to aid me.

There was something, however, that troubled me greatly. I tried to tell them, but I could only articulate, "I want—I want"—then I would drop away again into a horrible, black, bottomless pit.

One day a strong hand drew me up from this dreadful void. I languidly opened my eyes. Some one sat by the bed and laid a cool, firm hand on my hot fingers. I felt an inexpressible relief. Slowly I put up my other hand and touched a face which bent over me. To my surprise that face was wet with big tears. "Why," I muttered, "you can cry. I did not think you could."

"Oh, you poor little girl," a voice choked with emotion said, "try—try to get well."

"I will," I whispered and sank again into oblivion. But now it was not a black, bottomless pit, but a shadowy tunnel through which I was traveling—crawling along toward the blessed light I saw far ahead.

At last there came a day when I was bolstered up in bed and the physician, the nurse and Maggie greeted me joyfully.

"She is doing fine," Dr. Nolan said, rubbing his hands with satisfaction. "We will have her out now before many days."

"Maggie," I whispered to the faithful girl, as the physician and nurse withdrew for consultation, "Maggie——"

"Yis, darlint."

"Maggie—was—there—some one—else here—one day?"

"Yis, me pet. He came and sat by yez and the tears ran down his cheeks. Shure, he has a heart, if he is a——"

"Don't say it, Maggie," I whispered. "I don't want to think of that part of it. I just want to think—of him—you understand?"

"Glory be to God! I do!" responded Maggie with profound fervor.

Came another day when I sat on the terrace of Osirus House, wrapped in a gorgeous, fur-lined negligée. The salt wind bore its blessed message of healing to my frail self.

I could hear the roar of the breakers on the rocks below and, looking out upon the shining sea, could see the white sails of the drifting ships. I was born again. New life, new blood rushed through my weary body. A strange, delicious lassitude pervaded my frame. I saw the nurse smile at me as she tucked my wraps closer about me. Then I nodded in my chair.

I dreamed of Jerry Sanborn. I thought I saw him coming toward me across the silver sea, smiling, both hands outstretched. I wakened with a start and saw him coming along the terrace—big, strong, vital as ever, his face eager and keen, his onyx eyes agleam with joy. He came to me without a word, bent, took my hands and held them in a close clasp for a moment. "Thank God!" was all he said.

"You may talk to her just ten minutes, Mr. Sanborn," said the smiling nurse. "I will be back by that time."

"Tell me first," I asked, "who was it you killed that night?"

"Fortunately, I didn't kill him," he said gravely. "I wounded Yussef——"

"Yussef!" I ejaculated. "Then it wasn't Rameses who got out of his coffin?"

"No," he laughed. "But Yussef has been in the tombs ever since waiting his trial. He was persuaded," he paused grimly over the word, "to tell all he knew. But it has been impossible to go ahead until we knew whether you would recover. No, no, you must not yet talk about it. Dr. Nolan strictly forbids the topic until you are stronger. Then you shall hear everything from the start to date. I was allowed to merely see you to-day. And for me that is all I ask—to see you regaining your strength and your beauty."

"Where is Mark?" I asked.

"Mark—why, Mark has braced up wonderfully," he replied. "He has actually gone to work. Has a position in a big importing house and has no idea of contesting the will. He says you ought to have every dollar of Dr. Erskine's fortune for what you have gone through. Can you beat it? Good stuff in the boy after all, you see."

The rosy-cheeked nurse was back again now. "You must go, Mr. Sanborn," she ordered. "Time's up. But you may come again to-morrow at the same time."

I will now set down Jerry Sanborn's story as he told it and as subsequent events occurred to confirm his investigations.

Certain vague suspicions he possessed were crystallizing into definite theories when the story I furnished him set him working along entirely fresh lines.

From the moment that I confided to him all the information I possessed, Mr. Sanborn and his subordinates shadowed every one. There was scarcely an inmate of Osirus House who was not under constant surveillance.

Not one of that house party made a move that was not at once reported to him. The only lapse was when Shannon, napping in his chair, did not see me as I set out on my perilous midnight visit to the museum.

It will be recalled that Jerry—I found myself calling him that even at this date—had wired me he could not return that night. He had not anticipated he could catch the last train down to Bramley-by-the-Sea. But, at almost the last moment, he found he could leave affairs in the hands of one of his trusted subordinates.

He walked from the railway station and, as the great pile of Osirus House loomed up before him, he saw a light suddenly flare up in the museum. He stared aghast for one instant, then ran like a madman across the terrace, up the steps and burst into the hall, rousing Shannon from his stolen nap.

"Shannon! Good God!" he cried, "who is in the museum?" But not waiting for an answer, he ran to my door. My silent room, my empty bed, confirmed his fears.

At that moment my frenzied shrick rang through the house. McGuire, the second detective, came running up from the library where he was sleeping on a divan. The three detectives broke down the door leading to the circular stairway and reached the museum in time to save me from Yussef's murderous attack.

Although Hafiz was trying to protect me, the Nubian fought with such savagery, there was no certainty but that he might have overcome my uncle's servant had not help opportunely arrived.

After Yussef was subdued and secured, Jerry carried me to my room. By this time the entire household was aroused and fresh consternation reigned in Osirus House.

Hafiz, it was soon discovered, had tracked Yussef for forty-eight hours. Like a panther he followed the other, watched him as he stared in the library window and then he went to his hinding-place in the wine cellar.

Concealed behind casks of wine, he spied upon Yussef during the greater part of the next day, fearing to relax his vigilance lest the Nubian should escape.

When night came and the house was silent, Yussef came out from the wine cellar and crept cautiously up a flight of stairs to the kitchen and pantry. After he had eaten, he stole up a servant's stairway to the upper floor. Hafiz relentlessly trailed him, fearing he would harm me.

What was Hafiz' amazement to see Yussef produce a key from his robe and open the locked door leading to the museum.

Hafiz flattened himself behind the door and, as Yussef crept in, the former, with a lithe, sinuous movement, slipped after him and squatted behind a great Assyrian winged lion, standing at the foot of the spiral stairway.

Yussef locked the door behind him, and went on up the stairs into the museum, Hafiz stalking him on his hands and knees. "Thy servant knew that the jackal of the desert was bent on some foul business," he explained to Jerry Sanborn. "Therefore he followed the scent."

He saw Yussef go to the coffin of Rameses.

Now Hafiz began to suspect the other's mission. Like a serpent he crawled in and out among the glass cases of curios, when suddenly he heard the click of a key in the lock of the door at the foot of the stair. Yussef, too, apparently heard it, for Hafiz saw him hide behind the sarcophagus of Rameses.

When Jerry Sanborn had told me all this, I breathlessly asked: "Did Yussef murder my uncle and Justiniani?"

Jerry drew a long breath and regarded me with an extraordinary expression. "I want to tell you the story

as consecutively as I can, Miss Burgoyne," he said. "Don't ask me that yet, please."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WHAT MOTIVE?

WHEN my dear uncle was found so cruelly murdered, Gerald Sanborn at once realized that he had no common-place problem to solve. At first, he confessed to himself, he was—save in Mark's case—at a loss for a motive. He had listened to my cousin's besotted ravings and threats that night during the long walk on the beach. What if, he argued, Mark's fancied wrongs had so inflamed him that in his drunken rage he had gone to his uncle's rooms and, after a hot argument, had killed the old man in a drunken fury?

Gerald knew that Mark had a key to his uncle's study and was at liberty to go in whenever he chose. His rooms were next to Dr. Erskine's. It would have been the simplest plan possible for Mark to have waited until the house was at rest, then slipped into his uncle's apartments.

Loath as Gerald Sanborn was to believe this of a young man, whose naturally good instincts had been brutalized by incorrect living, it was at the outset the only theory in view. And it was Mark whom he first summoned to the library when he began his investigations. But the outburst of horrified protest from my cousin rather shook Gerald's theory. "Great God!" Mark ejaculated, "you can't suspect me, Jerry. I know I'm no good and that I've talked rottenly, but to kill my uncle in cold blood! Why, you're crazy, man—simply crazy."

"You had a key to his rooms, Mark," said Gerald quietly; "you will surely be suspected."

"I did have a key," retorted Mark, "but I've lost it."

"Lost it? Where?"

"Lord only knows. I missed it a few days ago and hunted high and low for it. If you don't believe me, ask Hafiz. I told him, and he said he would try to find it," replied Mark.

"Well, Mark," responded Gerald, "I hope for your sake that Hafiz will find that key. That's all now."

When later I told Gerald of Martha Torgvald's midnight visit to my uncle's room, he started from his chair and took a turn or two up and down the room. Had Martha the key which Mark had lost? darted through his brain. That might be possible, he reflected. Mark might have dropped it in the hall—on the stairway—and the clever, unscrupulous woman have found and kept it.

The murder of Justiniani coming upon the heels of that of my uncle made the problem still more complex.

The utter disorder of both rooms at once struck Gerald. To the casual observer it would appear that both men fought for their lives, but after Gerald had heard my story he abandoned that theory.

After Gerald had seen Mark he sent for Hafiz. The man appeared presently and salaamed profoundly before him.

"Hafiz," Gerald suddenly shot at him, "who murdered your master?"

Hafiz fixed his mournful, dog-like eyes on the detective. "Allah alone knows," he said with a deep sigh.

Gerald waited a moment, then, bending forward, took his square chin in his hand and surveyed Hafiz sternly. "Hafiz," he slowly questioned, "who killed Professor Justiniani?"

The man's eyes flashed fire. "Effendi," he said, "I know not, but it was a good piece of work. He was of evil repute, even in Alexandria—that place of devils. All knew and marked him and his vile deeds. He desecrated holy places. And the women!—none were safe. He crept like a reptile in the home of both rich and poor. He was forced to leave at the last."

"Hafiz, did he kill your master?"

"It may be, effendi."

"And—did—your master's—servant—slay in revenge?" slowly interrogated the other.

"Allah knows," returned Hafiz solemnly, "that I would joyfully have slain the vermin. But no, effendi, Hafiz has no blood upon his head."

"This Yussef," questioned Gerald, "did you know him in Alexandria?"

"Yes, effendi. He was the dragoman of the Italian—an unclean dog, the spawn of a thousand crocodiles, the scum of the slimy pool. His words were as the hot winds of the desert, his lies as many as the stars in the heavens. A thief, a corrupter of women, a gamester, a foul pig wallowing in the sty. Oh, yes! Hafiz knows Yussef."

"Did Yussef kill your master?"

"It may be, effendi—but why? My master was always good to him. He knew not that Yussef was a dog. He looked upon him only as the servant of his friend."

"Yes—why?" responded Gerald. "Why should he murder him? And did he kill his master?"

"No," said Hafiz quickly. "The Italian was of too great value to Yussef alive. He knew all his secrets. And those secrets, effendi, were like gold to the swine. No, I do not believe Yussef killed him."

"The deaths of my two friends have quite overwhelmed me," Dr. George Torgvald said as he sat down by the library table in response to Gerald's summons. "I can't sleep, I can't eat. I am absolutely unnerved."

"Of course," Gerald replied soothingly. "I can well understand that. Will you kindly tell me, Dr. Torgvald, how long you have known both these gentlemen?"

"Surely. I met Dr. Erskine two years ago on the Nile. We were both interested in research and became close friends—a friendship that has continued ever since. Justiniani I met first in Cairo and afterwards in Alexandria. I greatly admired his learning, but disapproved of his life. He bore an unsavory reputation, but Dr. Erskine would never listen to one word against him."

"So," thought Gerald, "you have tried to influence Dr. Erskine against Justiniani. I wonder why?"

"Possibly, Dr. Torgvald, I am mistaken," he said in his blandest tone, "but from numerous little details I have marked during my stay here, I have thought that Dr. Erskine was an admirer of your beautiful sister and that he was contemplating a closer relationship than that of friends."

Dr. Torgvald turned a livid hue, and an ugly gleam shone in his cold eyes as he replied: "You are quite correct in your surmise, Mr. Sanborn. Dr. Erskine had paid my sister attentions of an almost compromising character. He had given her every reason to believe that she was to be the future mistress of Osirus House. That was before his niece came."

"Why, what upon earth has Miss Burgoyne to do with this phase?" Gerald asked as if amazed.

"Just this," slowly retorted Dr. Torgvald. "From the day of her arrival Dr. Erskine perceptibly cooled in his ardor toward my sister. We suspect that she influenced her uncle against a proposed alliance."

"Ah! I see," murmured the other as if a sudden light had burst upon him.

"Undoubtedly Miss Burgoyne wished to be mistress here herself," insinuated Dr. Torgvald, "and worked to that end. She had a long interview with her uncle that last night of his life, and at its close he sent for me and insulted me."

"Insulted?"

"Yes. He curtly requested me to cut my stay short. I asked an explanation which he as curtly refused. We were leaving, as you know, the next morning."

"You do not know of any animosity between Dr. Erskine and Professor Justiniani?" asked Gerald, idly playing with a paper knife before him on the table.

"No-o——," Dr. Torgvald replied doubtfully. "No, I only know—" he paused abruptly—"but it's quite too insignificant a detail."

"Nothing is too insignificant in an affair of this kind."

Gerald interrupted, darting a sharp glance at the Scandinavian.

"Ah! well I knew that Justiniani was vexed because Dr. Erskine would not sell him the ornament he found in the mummy folds."

"Indeed?"

"Nor would he permit him to search the mummy to see if, by any chance, there might be a second bird-headed sphinx. Justiniani contended there might have been two—perhaps used as earrings or in bracelets. He was most anxious to ransack the sarcophagus, but Dr. Erskine vetoed the idea. I know that Justiniani was upset over it. It was this way: He felt that Dr. Erskine had honor enough in finding the first one known to Egyptologists. He said our host was selfish in keeping it all to himself."

"But," responded Sanborn, "the mummy was Dr. Erskine's property; he had paid an enormous sum for it——"

"Yes, and taken an enormous risk," replied Dr. Torgvald.

"Risk? What do you mean?"

"Why," replied Dr. Torgvald briskly, "there were hundreds of men in Alexandria who would have cut out Dr. Erskine's heart had they discovered he was taking away the Rameses. He had to bribe every one in sight to get it safely out of Egypt."

CHAPTER TWELVE

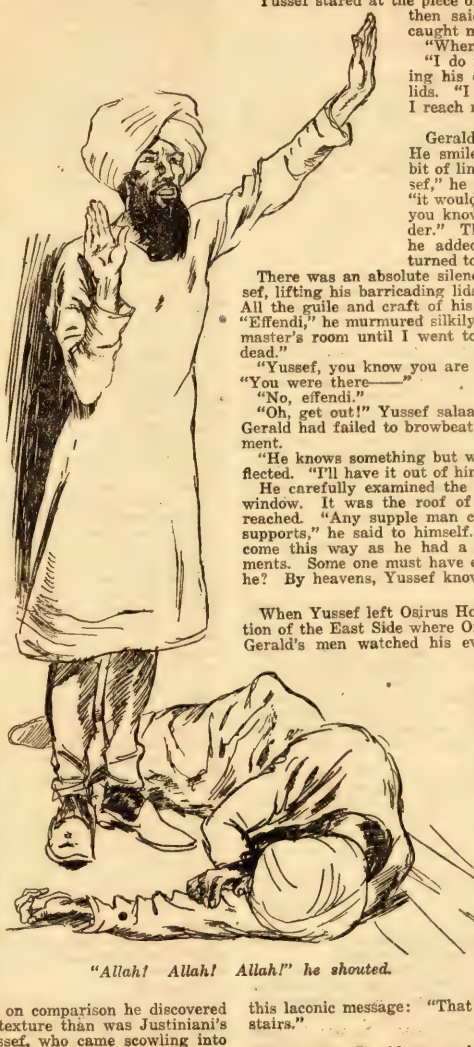
MY UNCLE'S WISH

LITERALLY ransacking every inch of the place for traces of the murderer, Gerald examined Professor Justiniani's room. His keen eyes, piercing nook and corner, were rewarded by two discoveries. One of these was a piece of white cloth, hanging to a tiny nail on the leg of a chair on which lay the clothing the Italian had worn that evening.

At first glance Gerald thought it might have been torn from some portion of the Italian's underwear, but on comparison he discovered it to be of a much coarser texture than was Justiniani's fine linen. He sent for Yussef, who came scowling into the library.

"Yussef," he said abruptly, "when did you see your master last?"

"When I waited upon him to his bed at midnight," was the surly reply.



"Allah! Allah! Allah!" he shouted.

Gerald suddenly lifted a corner of the man's flowing robe. "Was that when you tore this from your robe?" he demanded, fitting the bit of coarse linen he had found into a tiny rent of the garment.

Yussef stared at the piece of cloth as if hypnotized and then said slowly: "Yes, effendi, I caught my garment on a nail."

"Where was this nail?"

"I do not know," he replied, veiling his crafty eyes with his heavy lids. "I find my garment rent after I reach my room."

Gerald knew the man was lying. He smiled grimly and restored the bit of linen to his pocket-book. "Yussef," he said with quiet significance, "it would be better for you to tell all you know about your master's murder." Then, using one of his tricks, he added: "Tell me why you returned to your master's room later?"

There was an absolute silence for a moment, then Yussef, lifting his barricading lids, looked steadily at Gerald. All the guile and craft of his ancestors rose in his eyes. "Effendi," he murmured silkily, "I did not go again to my master's room until I went to rouse him and found him dead."

"Yussef, you know you are lying," bullyragged Gerald. "You were there——"

"No, effendi."

"Oh, get out!" Yussef salaamed mockingly and obeyed. Gerald had failed to browbeat the Nubian into any statement.

"He knows something but won't give it up," Gerald reflected. "I'll have it out of him yet."

He carefully examined the balcony outside Justiniani's window. It was the roof of a porte-cochere and easily reached. "Any supple man could have shinned up these supports," he said to himself. "Of course, Yussef didn't come this way as he had a key to his master's apartments. Some one must have entered this way. Who was he? By heavens, Yussef knows!"

When Yussef left Osirus House he was trailed to a section of the East Side where Orientals congregate. One of Gerald's men watched his every movement, until Hafiz appeared on the scene. Then, knowing he would be relentlessly trailed, the vigilance somewhat relaxed. Meantime Gerald, pursuing his own theory, engaged an apartment in an uptown house and took up his abode there daytimes, never leaving until after nightfall.

Just across the hall from his apartments were those of a Mr. and Mrs. Tolman, who were quite recent tenants.

For a day or so Gerald, through his keyhole, kept a watchful eye on the opposite door. At last he was rewarded. His telephone tinkled sharply. Taking down the receiver, he got this laconic message: "That party is just coming up the stairs."

Once more Gerald was on his knees peering through the keyhole. He caught a stealthy, padding step, then a man tapped softly for admission on the opposite door. Gerald's heart beat to suffocation, and every nerve in his body tingled with triumph as he recognized Yussef, in European

dress, wearing a small, purple velvet skull-cap in place of his turban. And he came near shouting with joy when the door across the hall was cautiously opened by a long, slim, white hand. The Nubian, bending, muttered something; the door was swung open and Martha Torgvald beckoned her visitor to enter.

This was the day before I was frightened by the face at the window of the library. Then came the subsequent occurrences, winding up with my illness.

All this was related to me upon my recovery. There was so much more to be told, so much to be cleared up, that Gerald waited until he had acted the play out to its finish.

By methods peculiar to detectives, Yussef had been forced to tell everything he knew. The Torgvalds under constant surveillance were palpably nervous and anxious as their intercourse with Yussef had been suddenly broken off. They did not know where he was nor what had happened.

And now I shall go back to the night my uncle sent for me, for it was his statement which, amid a cloud of vague theories, furnished the first definite clue Gerald Sanborn secured.

"Close and lock the door, Gwyn," my uncle had said, "for I have something of great importance to tell you." When I had obeyed, he added: "Draw a chair up close to me, my dear. I wish to speak in low tones."

"I must tell you, my child, that I have done a foolish —yes, a hazardous—thing in bringing the great Rameses out of Egypt. I spent a small fortune in bribes, and those whom I bribed would, I believe, take my money and in turn cut my throat. Rameses was a prince, and it was rumored in every bazaar in Cairo and Alexandria that there was a fortune in jewels in the linen wrappings of the mummy. I may have been followed to this country by emissaries of powerful officials, charged to recover the jewels. It is not at all unlikely. I am an old man and liable to die at any moment. I want you to take the bird-headed sphinx and secrete it for me. No one would ever think of its being in your possession. In the event of my death you may dispose of it to Mr. J. Poindexter Martin, who will pay you a great price. But if at any time, after my death, you become convinced that danger is at hand, that—I mean that some one is trying to get possession of the sphinx—I want you to go alone to the museum and secrete the ornament in the folds of the mummy——"

"Oh, Uncle Saltus!" I burst forth, "why?"

"Because, my dear, that will be the safest hiding-place in the house," he replied; "in fact, the last spot where one would look. Whoever might try to recover the jewels would search my rooms, thinking I would lose no time in unwrapping the dead prince and removing his ornaments—don't you see? Promise me you will do this should anything happen to me."

I tremblingly pledged my word to obey his commands. And then I told him of Martha Torgvald's search of his rooms.

The effect was electrical. Uncle Saltus sprang from his chair in violent rage. "That miserable woman!" he ejaculated; "she is doubtless in the pay of some Alexandrian official and is here to spy upon me and if possible steal some of the jewels. Of course, that is it. That is why she has so flattered and cajoled me—to throw me off my guard; to make me believe she loved me. By heaven, I'll settle her and her rascally brother, who is of course in the plot. I'm going to send for him and order them to leave."

"But, Uncle Saltus, what will they do to me?" I faltered.

"I shall make no explanations," returned my uncle warmly. "They will understand. And to think how they have tried to poison my mind against Professor Justiniani! They are envious of our friendship. Outrageous!"

I hesitated a moment. "Uncle," I asked, "are you sure Justiniani is all right?"

My uncle looked sharply at me. "Now, don't tell me," he exploded, "that you have seen anything wrong there."

"No, I'm not going to," I answered. "It's only that my instinct tells me he is not to be trusted."

"Well, now, Gwyn," replied my uncle briskly. "I'll tell you what I shall do. I will put him to the test, and I believe I can prove to you, my dear, that he is a reliable friend. He has been most desirous to examine the Rameses further. His opinion is that there may be another ornament of equal value. But I have so far refused, and I will admit that he has been a bit sullen over it. Now, I have two keys to the museum. Here is one, which I ask you to take and secrete together with the bird-headed sphinx. After I have disposed of the Torgvalds I will send for Justiniani. I will lead the conversation up to the right point, and I will let him see that the duplicate key to the museum is here on my desk." He laid the key down as he spoke in plain sight. "I shall, moreover, give him a key to this room, telling him to go in and out as he pleases. Then we shall see if he takes the museum key and tries to further explore the Rameses. Should he be so dishonorable, I will admit that you have judged him better than I and I will turn him out neck and heels. And now, Gwyn, one moment." He went into his bedroom and presently returning, handed me a small parcel. "Here is the precious sphinx," he smiled. "Guard it carefully. In time I shall, if I live, publish a brochure on it. If I should pass out, you can sell it if you wish, although that will not be necessary as you are to inherit my fortune."

As I have before related my amazement and gratitude were unbounded. My uncle talked a little longer with me and then dismissed me with a good-night kiss.

And so when I saw that dark, wicked face—the face that to my excited imagination was that of the long dead Egyptian prince—peering in at the library window, I felt sure peril was approaching, and at my first opportunity hastened to obey my uncle's orders, with what result I have already told.

This interview with my uncle which I faithfully rehearsed to Gerald Sanborn started him on the trail which finally reached the solution of the complicated mystery.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE TRUTH

WHEN Yussef, brow-beaten, threatened and almost insensible from the third degree to which he was subjected, at last consented to tell all he knew, his statement was directly taken down by a police stenographer. In substance it was as follows:

"The night of the murder of Effendi Erskine, my master sent for me. He had just come from the room of his host. 'Yussef,' he said, 'I want your help to-night. At half after one you are to hide in the upper hall near the door that leads to the museum. I am going into Dr. Erskine's study to get the key to the museum which lays on his desk. Then we will go up and search the Rameses for jewels, take away what we find, and I will return the key to Dr. Erskine's desk. He will never be the wiser, for he has never yet fully searched the mummy. I shall pay you well for your part. If you should see or hear any one approaching, you must hasten to warn me so I can get safely back to my room.'

"Therefore at the hour I concealed myself in the upper hall. I was behind a carved oak chest where I could watch the main stairway, the doors of Effendi Torgvald and that of my master. In a few moments I saw him steal out of his room. He unlocked the door of his host's study and entered. At that moment I heard a sound of footsteps and low voices on the great stairway. I started

to warn my master when suddenly I saw him rush out of Effendi Erskine's study and hasten across to his own room. In panic, I fled to my hiding-place just as the young Effendi Mark Erskine and the effendi with the stone face reached the top stairs. I heard them say good-night, and saw them go each his way. Now, I desired greatly to get to my sister's room, but just as I was about to attempt it I heard the sound of a door opening stealthily. It was that of Effendi Erskine's sleeping-room. Some one came out and stole down the hall to the door of Effendi Torgvald. This person tapped lightly on the door. It was quickly opened. The light from within shone full on the person who had knocked. That person's hands and garments were covered with blood. I was so frightened I did not know what to do. I dared not go to my master then, for I reasoned that if any one were to see me about I might be suspected of the crime. For I knew then that a crime had been done. Accordingly I lay where I was until the gray of dawn, then crept to my room, shivering with terror. I did not go to my master even at the usual time. I did not know what to do. So I waited.

"After I heard the shouts of alarm I rose and joined the others. I saw the stony-faced Effendi Sanborn drive all without the rooms of the murdered man. I saw my master go into his own room. Then I went to him.

"He was very angry with me. 'Where were you last night?' he asked me with wrath. I told him that I saw him rush to his door. 'Yes,' he said, 'the old man moved in his bedroom and I feared he was coming out, so I ran.' 'No, effendi,' I said, 'you heard not the old man moving about, but the murderer.' 'How do you know?' he questioned sharply. Then I told him all I had seen.

"My master smiled—a dreadful smile. I had seen him smile that way before, many times in Alexandria. I knew what that smile portended. But he said naught to me save that in the excitement of the discovery of the murder he had managed to secure the key to the museum door. 'I have it, Yussef,' he said, 'but I shall not dare use it until after the inquest and funeral, when the excitement shall have died down somewhat.'

"Late in the afternoon of the day my master was murdered I saw him knock at Effendi Torgvald's door. He was admitted. I waited without. I could hear low, angry voices, and once my master laughed—a terrible laugh. Presently he came forth smiling with an air of victory. Effendi Torgvald stood in the door, staring like a dead man after my master as he strode to his own room.

"And now a sly devil entered into my heart. I was frightened of all these surroundings. I wished to go away. But I did not wish to go empty-handed. I thought that I should like to search the covering of the great Rameses myself. If there were gems, why should I not possess them as well as my master? I could return with them to Egypt where I should sell them for much money. I had only to get the key from my master, secure the jewels and depart. I knew that he would do nothing to punish me, as that would only implicate him. So I resolved to go to his room and steal the key from his clothing. I watched him as I waited on him that night. I saw him put the key in the pocket of his waistcoat which he hung over the back of the chair. I had, of course, a key to my master's room, and in the night I went softly in. He lay sleeping soundly. His window was wide open, the moonlight streaming in.

"I had just taken the key from his waistcoat pocket when I saw a shadow in the moonlight on the balcony. I dropped to the floor and crawled into the closet. A man came through the window and went to my master's bed. He bent over him and put his hands on his throat. My master leaped up and struggled fiercely. I saw him clutch at the other's head in his agony. But presently he sank bank and all was still. The murderer went stealthily out through the window, I saw his face. It was Effendi Torgvald."

"I did not dare try to go to the museum then. I went away to the city. But I watched at the railway station in New York for the coming of Effendi Torgvald. When at last I saw him and his sister—the witch-woman—hurrying through the throng, I followed them, first to a hotel, then to a place in a great house uptown. Then I went back to my room and procured American clothing. I had determined to get much money from Effendi Torgvald for what I knew. I went to the great house and, going to the door of Effendi Torgvald, I knocked. The witch-woman admitted me. She was alone. She gave me money after I had talked to her a short time. I left her and went to my room. I then dressed myself in my Egyptian garments and went back by the railway to Osirus House. I looked through the window and saw Effendi Sanborn talking to the young mistress.

"I was afraid of Effendi Sanborn. He has a face as hard as the pyramids and a thousand eyes. He sees everything. So I did not venture that night, but lay in the wine cellars until the next night, when I crept through the house up to the museum.

"I did not want to kill the young mistress, but thought I must to save myself. Had I dreamed that the spawn of a serpent—Hafiz—was on my trail, I should have killed him." Here the dreadful story ended.

A knot of relentless-eyed men forced their way past a protesting servant into the library of Dr. George Torgvald. He rose angrily from his chair as his unwelcome visitors entered. On the other side of his desk stood a slender, white-faced, burning-eyed woman, her long blonde hair falling over her shoulders in disarray, her hands clutching at the scarlet negligée she wore. She stood like a frozen statue of fear, gazing in panic at the intruders.

"What does this mean?" began Dr. Torgvald arrogantly.

"George Torgvald, I arrest you," replied Gerald Sanborn, "for the murders of Dr. Saltus Erskine and Professor Luigi Justiniani——"

A figure suddenly detached itself from the group of detectives—a man who laughed and babbled hysterically. "No—no!" he shrieked, "he did not kill Effendi Erskine—no—it was the witch-woman who drove the knife in the old man's heart—her robe was all covered with blood. I saw her—I saw her!"

"Yes, it was Martha Torgvald who killed your uncle," Gerald was saying to me as I sat listening to his story of the arrest. "She resolved to make one more attempt to find the bird-headed sphinx. The Torgvalds were in the pay of Egyptian officials to recover any jewels they might secure. Martha knew they were to leave in the morning and decided to search your uncle's bedroom. She was the one Justiniani heard moving about in there. Your uncle roused and she killed him with a knife she had carried to his room.

"When Justiniani went to their room and told them that he held them in the hollow of his hand, the Torgvalds knew that it was his life or theirs. This time the brother did the work. They would have killed Yussef, too, in time, as dead men tell no tales."

"How did you first suspect Dr. Torgvald?" I asked.

"I found several blonde hairs clutched tightly in Justiniani's hand," Jerry replied. "I knew Yussef was mixed up in the affair and that he knew the truth. What I did not know was that the sister actually killed your uncle. Yussef did not tell us that until we were making the arrest, although I was convinced that she had guilty knowledge and was an accesory both before and after the fact."

Martha Torgvald cheated the law by poisoning herself in prison. Her brother paid the penalty. Yussef was sent back to Egypt while Hafiz remained with me as major-domo at Osirus House.

Gerald Sanborn came to say good-by after the whole dreadful affair had come to an end.

It was a glorious day in the latter part of May. The trees were flaunting their exquisite golden-green foliage, the lotos buds were opening in the marble pool. We stood

by it as he took my hand. "I wish you would give me a lotos blossom to eat," he murmured.

"Why to eat?" I asked.

"You know the legend," he responded, "that he who eats of the lotos forgets the past."

"Why—do you wish to forget?" I murmured, not daring to look at the face bending over me.

"Can you ask that?" he answered reproachfully. "I must forget. I must go my way—my hard, lonely way," he paused abruptly. In a moment he went on. "But after all, do I really want to forget? Do I really wish to lose the dearest memory of my life? Gwyn—forgive me for calling you that. Just once let me say it. Gwyn, I am better and stronger for having known you. You will always be the star amid the gloom. Good-by——" He caught my hand and almost crushed it in his big paw, then turned and strode rapidly away.

I looked after him. Could I let him go? Should I renounce happiness for a foolish, conventional prejudice?

"Jerry!" I called.

He wheeled abruptly, looking back, but took no step toward me. His eyes were full of a pained surprise.

"Jerry," I said, holding out my hand, "come back." Slowly as if led by an invisible thread, he came. "Jerry," I stammered, "I don't intend you shall go. I find—I need —some one—to watch over—and take care of me. Will you—take the assignment?"

"Do you mean——" he began in a voice husky with emotion.

"Oh, you big stupid," I cried. "A fine detective you are, if you can't see an inch beyond your nose. Have you no theory as to what I mean?"

His arms were around me now. "Gwyn—Gwyn!" he cried with passionate rapture. "Oh, am I dreaming?"

"No," I cried, and I pinched him as I spoke. "No, you are awake. And so am I—to the fact that I love you, Jerry Sanborn. Will you marry me?"

Do not fail to read the exciting detective story featured in our next issue. The title is "A Double Mystery."

TAKE NOTICE!

The feature stories that have been published in this magazine are well worth reading, if you have not already seen them. The list is as follows:

No.
1 THE EEL MAN, by Robert Carlton Brown
2 ZITANA OF MAISON ROUGE, by F. W. Doughty
3 THE MYSTERIOUS WEB, by Armstrong Perry
4 UNDER THE HYPNOTIC SPELL, by Dr. H. Enton
5 THE SILKEN SHEATH, by Crittenden Marriott
6 A FORTUNE TELLER'S SECRET, by Gladys Hall
7 THE MYSTIC EMBLEM, by Marie Coolidge Rask
8 THE CARDS OF FATE, by William Goode
9 MR. BACHELLER'S APARTMENTS, By William Hamilton Osborne

No.
10 THE INNER WHEEL, by Octavius Roy Cohen
11 THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY, by Robt. C. Brown
12 THE SIGN OF THE SEVEN SHARKS, By Charles F. Oursler
13 UNDER A MASK, by Crittenden Marriott
14 CASE 4,444, by Gladys Hall
15 AFTER A MILLION, by Police Captain Howard
16 SHADOWING THE BLUE TRIANGLE, By Chas. F. Oursler
17 THE CASE OF CAPTAIN FORTESQUE, By Redfield Ingalls

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LUSITANIA MAY BE RAISED BY NEW SALVAGE SHIP

IT is not unlikely that one of the first great undertakings after the war will be the raising of the *Lusitania*. The vessel carried a huge treasure to the bottom of the sea. Its value is estimated at $14,000,000, of which $2,000,000 is in gold and silver, brass and copper; a like amount of jewelry and other personal valuables; $5,000,000 in negotiable and unregistered securities in the ship's vault, and a cargo valued at $5,000,000. Much of the latter is believed to be uninjured.

The great ship lies on the shifting sands at the bottom of St. George's Channel, in 270 feet of water. Divers and pontoons cannot operate at this depth, so an entirely new type of salvage ship has been designed by a marine engineer, Carl J. Lindquist. At the surface it will be only about thirty feet in length and half that in width, but sweeping downward is a hull which may be extended to a length of 300 feet, and which is mounted on big wheels, resting upon the bed of the sea.

Near the bottom is a large searchlight, capable of illuminating the water for a distance of thirty feet or more, and by means of this the helmsman, far below the surface, will direct the operation of a hollow, flexible steel rod. When the sunken ship is located, a powerful stream of water will be forced through the rod, to clear away the sand which has drifted high around the lost craft.

Four enormous perpendicular pontoons of hollow steel will then be sunk, two on each side of the ship, and to them will be attached huge cables, passing under the sunken hull. When all is in readiness the vessel may be lifted to the surface. There the gaping wound in her side can be repaired and the ship floated into port. This is but an outline of a most ingenious plan, one single feature being the hinged bases of the pontoons, which permit them to sway back and forth in stormy weather without releasing their burdens.

Nor will their usefulness end with the raising of the *Lusitania*. The ocean bed off the west coast of Europe is dotted with rich prizes. Near Havre, in 150 feet of water, rests the *Parthenon* with a $7,000,000 cargo; the *Healdton*, an American ship, carried $3,000,000 worth of goods to the bottom off the Dutch coast, while but ten miles from the *Lusitania* the *Arabic* took her fatal plunge.

TAKING CHANCES

By BEULAH POYNTER

BETTY BENNETT stared at the intruder with wide, frightened eyes. She pulled the folds of her evening cloak about her small figure with hands that shook perceptibly, but she managed a half-hearted smile as she stammered in a small, shaky voice:

"Who—who are you—wha—what do you want?"

The man grinned and coughed apologetically.

Though he was a very large man, and filled the entire doorway, Betty suddenly lost her fear of him, and drawing herself to her full five feet, pointed dramatically at him with a dimpled white finger.

"Leave this room instantly!"

The man merely grinned again and shook his head.

Betty stamped her foot angrily.

"Leave this room!"

Billy handed him the slip of paper upon which Castle had made his marks.

"Sorry I can't oblige a lady," said the man, "but I took a big chance to get in here, and with your kind permission I'll stay a while." His voice was rather musical, and Betty, now that her first fright was over, saw that he was decidedly good-looking in a big, boyish sort of way. He was dressed well, quietly enough save for a too large diamond ring and a pin of the variety known as "head light."

Betty laughed hysterically, but when his laughter joined hers she exclaimed:

"If you don't leave this room instantly—I'll—I'll telephone the police or—or the room clerk!" She darted across the room to lift the receiver from a white enameled desk phone, but as she touched it his authoritive voice made her hesitate.

"I wouldn't if I were you!"

"Why not?"

"It wouldn't look pretty for them to find me here at this time of night—it's about ten o'clock, isn't it?"

"I'll tell them how you got in!" she snapped.

"By you opening the door for me," smiled the stranger.

"Ye—es—but you knocked."

"I always knock before entering a lady's room."

"Oh! This is terrible!" wailed Betty, sudden tears welling up in her big brown eyes. "How'd I know you were a burglar or a housebreaker or a——"

"I'm not," quietly said the man.

"I—I ordered ice-water and when you knocked I thought it was the bellboy, and when I opened the door——"

"Stepped inside!"

"Get out this minute! Get out! I don't want you here! What'll my husband say!"

"Your husband is at a business meeting, I made sure of that," said the man. He twisted his big diamond ring and smiled knowingly.

"He won't be back for an hour at least, seeing he just left."

Once more Betty's hand touched the telephone receiver, but the stranger, leaving the doorway, quickly laid his hand on hers.

She gave a little cry of loathing and snatched her hand away.

"Now, see here," he said quietly. "If you telephone downstairs it would only stir up a scandal which would hurt you, not me. I'm not a thief, they know me here. I've been coming to this hotel for years; here's my card." He extended a bit of cardboard toward her which she knocked viciously out of his hand; it fluttered to the carpet, face upward, and looking down she read the name Robert Castle engraved in the center.

"My room is next your apartment," he continued quietly. "I've seen you a lot of times. I think you've noticed me."

"No, I haven't!" cried Betty. "Never!"

"Well, I have you. I think you're about as cute a thing in petticoats as——"

"That will do," said Betty coldly.

"Well, anyway, you had me dead from the minute I saw you. I heard you and your husband to-night——"

"Oh!" cried Betty in dismay.

"The walls are very thin, you know. He'd promised to take you to a cabaret, hadn't he?"

"Ye—es," Betty admitted grudgingly.

"Then, when some one telephoned him, he forgot his promise and went to a business meeting at his club instead?"

"He said it was his club," said Betty in a vicious small voice. The folds of her cloak fell from her shoulders exposing a very soft, white neck enveloped in a cloud of shell-pink tulle. The man's eyes glowed as they rested upon her.

"After you were all dressed," said the stranger insinuatingly; "I don't blame you for being angry and threatening to go cabareting with some other man."

"Did you hear that?" cried Betty, blushing to the roots of her dark hair.

"Yes, and more. That many times this has happened, that more often you are left alone than otherwise. I don't blame you for being indignant and wanting to go with some one who will appreciate you. It's a sin the way he neglects you. So I'm here to offer my services." He spoke earnestly and Betty seemed to waver, then drawing herself together, she said:

"You must go at once. I didn't mean what I said, not a word of it. Of course, Billy went to the club. They have business meetings at the clubs, and I wouldn't go cabareting with another man, not for anything in the whole world! Why, we've only been married for six months! How dare you think I'd go with you? You—you beast!"

The man laughed easily.

"Oh, say, now," he admonished, "that's not a pretty way to put it. I tipped that bellboy five dollars to let me bring in that pitcher of ice-water—don't you think that's worth at least a smile? I'm lonesome as sin, and so are you. You're all ready to go out—come on, be a good scout and let me take you somewhere where we can have a bite and a dance. I'll not keep you out late—honest I won't; it'll be a real lark. I'm awfully strong for you, but your word goes. Come, what d'ye say?"

He was such a boyish-looking young giant and his pleading was so like a spoiled child, that Betty laughed good-naturedly, and with the air of a naughty child she pulled her evening cloak about her and said: "All right, I'll go!"

The next instant they stared at each other in consternation, for some one was fumbling at the lock of the door the stranger had just entered.

"Betty! Betty!" called a distinctly masculine voice from the outer hall. "Betty! are you there? I've left my key in my other trousers and can't get in. I've left some papers I need!"

The stranger looked interrogatively at the little wife, who gasped, swallowed, then blurted out:

"Who—who is it?"

"Who is it?" in surprised tones from the other side of the door. "Say, what's the matter with you? It's me—Billy!"

"Oh—Billy!" she giggled. "Why—why did you come back? Wha—what d'ye want?"

The stranger was beginning to show signs of intense nervousness.

"Your husband?" he asked in an almost inaudible whisper. She nodded assent.

"My God!" he ejaculated. "Say, hide me."

"I—e—can't!"

He looked about frantically.

"Say, will you please open this door?" demanded her husband in an irate voice.

"In a minute, dear, in a minute!" she replied in a cloyingly sweet tone, though her dark eyes shot daggers at the intruder and she shook a small fist at him viciously.

"He's frightfully jealous!" she whispered, "and will never believe the truth. It would serve you right if he did kill you. But if he killed you, he'd kill me, too."

The visitor had grown white about the mouth. All his dapper self-assurance was gone. He seemed to wilt, to shrink into half his size. He looked wildly about for a means of escape. He was too large to crawl under the sofa or behind the piano—no fire-escape was visible. A door to the left and one to the right seemed to beckon him.

"Who's in there with you?" said the husband suspiciously. "Who's that your talking with?"

"With? With?" stammered Betty. "No one!"

"I distinctly heard voices!" said Bennett. He rattled the doorknob in a most disconcerting manner. "What in heaven's name is the matter with you, Betty? Will you open this door, or shall I have to call the clerk to do it?"

Betty looked wildly at her unwelcome guest; she had grown quite pale and showed she was truly afraid of her jealous husband. Her evening cloak fell unheeded to the floor, and she stood revealed in her soft shimmering dinner gown. But her beauty and its attractiveness seemed to have lost their fascination for the man. With a gasp of dismay he made a dash to the door at his right. Betty caught at his coat neck as he did so, whispering frantically.

"Don't go in there; that's my bedroom!" He paid no heed to her, but jerking away, rushed into the ivory-and-blue room and stood trembling behind the closed door.

"Betty, Betty!" Bennett called again.

"Yes, yes," she answered in muffled tones. "I—I'm in the bathtub. I——"

"Bathtub!" As she unlocked the door he strode into the room, six feet of indignant, suspicious manhood—usually good-natured looking, but now scowling and anything but pleasant to gaze upon. "Say, where do you get that? In the bathtub in a dinner gown?"

Betty gave a sudden wail and dropped to the sofa with her hand to her cheek. "I—I didn't mean tub! I—oh—I'm so ill, Billy, I'm really ill!"

Billy sniffed. He started past her to his room at the left, but at the doorway paused abruptly.

"What's the matter?"

"I—I——" Betty's dark eyes dilated. "My head—my—it aches terribly!"

"Who was here with you?" Before she could reply he had come to where she sat and stood looking down at her with a gaze that seemed to sear her craven little soul. She looked the personification of guilt, but she shook her head in an attempt at indignant denial. At that moment

the stranger in the bedroom sneezed a muffled sneeze, but the suspicious husband heard it.

"So!" he ejaculated. He sprang with one bound across the room, Betty at his heels, striving to hold him back, clinging like a playful kitten at his coat tails and sobbing incoherently.

As he reached the door, the other man stepped out facing him. Betty gasped, but the stranger seemed to have grown strangely cool. He nonchalantly passed her angry, astounded husband and, crossing to her, said in a professional tone of voice:

"My dear young lady, don't excite yourself—please don't excite yourself. Here, here, drink this," and he extended a glass of water to her.

She took it in amazement, gulping a portion of it, but spilling the greater part on her gown while she stared at him.

"Who are you, may I ask?" said Bennett in a sarcastic voice thinly veiling his suspicion.

"Why, didn't she tell you?" inquired the young man, in well-simulated surprise. "I'm the physician!" He glanced at Betty out of his eye.

She gave a sudden wail and again flung herself on the divan from which she had risen at his entrance. She covered her face with her hands and rocked back and forth, sobbing hysterically to cover the outburst of laughter the blond giant's remark had called forth. For a moment Billy Bennett looked credulous. The stranger's attitude was very professional, and there certainly was something wrong with his wife. The quarrel they had had previous to his leaving earlier in the evening might have made her ill; she was upset by it. He had been a brute? He sat down beside her and cuddled her shaking little figure in his arms, murmuring terms of endearment, calling himself several kinds of names.

The physician stood in the center of the room, a self-satisfied grin on his good-looking face, though there was no doubt he was looking for some avenue of escape.

Billy Bennett, lifting his head from Betty's tousled mass of dark hair, caught that grin. There was nothing of the medical man about it, and suspicion ripened again. Betty was a flirt, and the doctor good-looking.

"What's the matter with my wife?" he demanded abruptly.

Mr. Castle cleared his throat, looked at Betty, whose head was now buried deep in the sofa cushions, scratched his head and mumbled in an inarticulate way: "She's suffering from an attack of medella—er—oblongata of the——"

"Wha—at?" shrieked Billy.

"Medella er oblongata of the cerebellum," the pseudo doctor pronounced it glibly.

Back in the recesses of Billy's brain he remembered having heard something similar, but before he could analyze the words Betty shrieked forth in pain, and he demanded what was to be done for her.

Betty raised her head and looked at Castle helplessly. But he had gone too far to retract; taking a notebook from his pocket, he tore a loose leaf from it, and using his fountain-pen made some quick notations on it.

"Here's a prescription," he said calmly. "Have it filled."

"Prescription?" Billy said suspiciously, looking at the scrawl the other handed to him. "It looks like hen tracks to me."

Castle coughed. "The druggist will understand—it's quite clear."

"Hm!" said Billy, "I'll take it down myself."

Betty gave a gasp of relief which quickly changed into a cry of terror, for her husband stepped to a combination bookcase and writing desk, and, opening the drawer, took out a small automatic revolver, which he dropped into his coat pocket with a glance at the intruder which bore no good, should he chance to be other than he claimed. There was a hard, steely glint in Billy's blue eyes, and Betty shuddered as she watched him.

"You may be a physician," he said quietly. "I hope so for both your sakes, but whether you are or not, I want to make certain you are here on my return. My wife is entirely too ill to be left alone; so I think I'll tie you to the piano in case you have a desire to leave before the prescription is filled."

"But, my dear fellow——" expostulated Castle. Betty forgot she was ill and sprang to her feet with a cry of protest which her husband did not heed. He stepped quickly into the bedroom, and before the stranger could make a bolt for the door he returned with a sheet.

"This is an outrage!" exclaimed the visitor. "I'll not submit to it."

"You've nothing to lose if you are what you claim to be," said Billy grimly.

There was a silent struggle between the two men, upon which Betty stared, dark eyes black with terror, small face white with fear. The men were of a size, but Billy was the stronger and in every way had the advantage of the other, who evidently, seeing it was useless to struggle, gave a half-hearted laugh intended to be good-natured, and submitted to being tied to the piano, both arms and legs being bound securely by the sheet.

"Oh, very well, go as far as you like," he said. "I've heard of jealous husbands, but you're the limit; no wonder your wife is a wreck!"

For reply Billy took the automatic from his pocket, shifting it from one hand to another before he returned it to his coat, then he walked abruptly to the door.

"I'll be back immediately—I hope with the prescription," he said grimly. "Betty, I trust you to see that his bonds are not untied."

When his footsteps sounded down the hall Betty flung herself against the door, facing the trussed-up man with blazing fury in her small face.

"Oh! You! You!" she cried. "Killing is too good *for* you. I'd like to hand you over to the Germans!"

"You have!" he answered unpleasantly. "I think your husband is one!"

"He isn't!" she snapped, coming closer to him. "He's a full-blooded American! Oh, this is all your fault! I wish I'd told him the truth and let him blow your brains out!"

"Thanks!"

"I would, too, only it would ruin the carpet!" she sobbed.

"Oh, forget it! Untie me and let me get away from here before he gets back!"

"I can't untie you! He'd know we had lied, then——"

"He'll know it anyway." He was rapidly becoming pea green. His immaculate collar had wilted, his sleek blond hair was dank and stringy now, and he presented a most bedraggled appearance. Betty looked at him with loathing unmixed with sympathy.

"What did you write on the paper you gave him?" she said suddenly.

"Oh, I just made some hen tracks," he answered.

"Hen tracks!' she shrieked. "Didn't you write *anything* at all?" He shook his head dismally. "Why didn't you write a prescription?"

"Yes, why didn't I?" he sneered. "Prescriptions are written in Latin; do I look as if I could write Latin?"

"No," she admitted. "The druggist will know it isn't a prescription, won't he?"

"Well, rather."

"Then Billy will know we lied! You saw that revolver! Can't you see the headlines in the paper?"

"Say, for God's sake, untie me! I've got to get out of this before he gets back." He tugged hard at the sheet that held him strapped to the piano, but could not loosen it. Betty seemed glued to the spot, watching him as though fascinated. The sudden opening of the door behind her caused her to shriek out in terror. On seeing it was Billy re-entering the room she clapped her hand over her mouth and giggled spasmodically.

Castle ceased his struggles and slumped down upon the keyboard of the piano, staring at the grim, silent husband who gazed first at his wife and then at her admirer. Betty broke the silence.

"Did—did you get my me—medicine?" she stammered. He made her repeat the question.

"No, the elevator wasn't running. As I don't want to climb the stairs, I'm going to send a bellboy out for it."

Castle groaned. Betty sank onto the divan and watched her husband from the corner of her eye as he took down the receiver and asked over the telephone that a bellboy be sent immediately to their apartment. Then he turned to their visitor, and with an ingratiating smile, which was more fear inspiring than his threatening attitude, he inquired if he would like his bonds loosened.

"Bet your life!" He untied the sheet, but as Castle started to make a break for the door he asked him to be seated in an authoritative voice when brooked of no refusal.

"Have a drink," he said. He poured a stiff drink of whisky for himself and pushed the carafe toward the other man.

As Castle's trembling hands clinked the glass against the bottle with an endeavor to pour out the liquid, there was a loud rap at the door and he dropped the glass with a crash to the floor.

"Come in!" said Billy Bennett. A very red-haired, freckled-face buttons entered. He swaggered into the center of the room and stood grinning as he awaited orders, his hands thrust in his pockets, his carroty head cocked on one side. But a youngster in years, he was old in experience, vastly precocious—and he seemed to sense the tension of the situation.

Billy handed him the slip of paper upon which Castle had made his marks.

"Take this prescription to the druggist downstairs," he said, "and have it filled immediately, and if he can't fill it, come right back and tell me."

"Yes, sir," said the boy. He toyed with the paper an instant, then turned on his heel out of the apartment, whistling "Everybody's Doing It."

Billy took the revolver from his pocket and laid it on the table between himself and the guest, but within easy reach of his hand. Drawing up a big arm-chair, he seated himself on a line with Betty and Castle, and calmly lighting a cigar sank back into the cushions with an air of ease.

Castle attempted to imitate his example, but after several futile attempts to light a cigarette gave it up as a bad job and sitting on the edge of his chair, with tense, taut nerves a-quiver with anticipation, he waited for the bellboy to return.

Betty's feelings were indescribable. She was numb with terror; already she saw the intruder cold and dead at her feet. She saw herself dying a martyr to her husband's jealousy. She saw Billy arrested for murder. Convulsive shudders shook her slight frame, her face and hands were burning with fever, hiccoughs almost choked her. No need for her to pretend illness, she was ill. The room reeled with her; she clung to the divan to steady herself, to keep her wits about her.

Down the long hallway came a shrill musical whistle, "Everybody's Doing It!" She straightened up abruptly, ready to meet the impending tragedy. Billy's hand rested on the revolver. Castle's eyes seemed to start from his head. As the bellboy knocked at the door they simultaneously sprang to their feet.

"Come in," said Bennett in a loud voice.

Buttons entered. He sauntered down to Bennett, still whistling, widely grinning, and, as he extended a small box to him, said:

"Here's your pills, boss. Seventy-five cents charges."

As Bennett took the box, staring at its contents in bewildered relief, the youngster winked deliberately at Castle and waved at him the five-dollar bill he had given him earlier in the evening.

"Your charge, doctor?" said Bennett thickly.

"Five dollars," Castle answered glibly, and pocketing the bill, followed Buttons from the room.

"In Sleepy Hollow" is the name of a remarkable story coming in our August 15th edition. Be sure to read it!

BIG KETTLE A RELIC

OUT in the quiet yard of the Clinton Kelly Memorial Church, Portland, Ore., there stands an enormous kettle, which, because of its unusual size and shape, strikes the wayfarer as having historic interest.

Few know that this relic was used on a whaling vessel in early days—so early, in fact, that Oregon was yet in swaddling clothes when the ship was wrecked somewhere off the mouth of the Columbia—but as the mighty breakers of the Pacific battered the hull to pieces this cauldron washed ashore with the other débris and lay half buried in sand on the beach until finally discovered and brought to the hamlet Portland on an early steamship.

This huge utensil, made much as any iron pot, save that two sides were flat, was one of many used in trying oil from harpooned whales.

Shortly after the cauldron arrived in Portland it was purchased by the Rev. Clinton Kelly, whose homestead at that time comprised the east side districts now known as Waverleigh and Richmond.

Upon the marriage of Archon Kelly to Elizabeth Roark, and their subsequent removal to a claim at Pleasant Home, Clinton Kelly gave the immense receptacle to his son, who in turn used it for years as a commissary department when preparing rations for his quadruped troops. One fateful autumn, however, a careless hired man started a fire beneath it while empty and the relic, unappreciative of this attempt at dry humor, cracked from heat and was rendered useless.

After the death of Archon the heirloom passed into possession of his son John, who later brought it to Portland and placed it near the scene of its early usefulness, where it now serves as a unique flower urn in the churchyard which bears its purchaser's name.

NOT ROMANTIC

By JOHN LAWRENCE

WHEN I was old enough to be a soldier and young enough to be insanely curious about everything, I enlisted in a veteran regiment of volunteer cavalry. Raw recruits are nuisances to veterans, as I learned when I myself became a veteran, but two or three of our older men endured me patiently, and to one of them, Burney, I attached myself closely because there seemed some mystery about him.

There was nothing unusual about Burney's manner. He was a plain, matter-of-fact fellow, about forty years of age, who seldom talked about himself or anything else. He never made trouble, nor got drunk, yet often he would be absent from roll-call for days at a time; when he returned he never was held to account for his absence, although other men were severely punished for being out of camp overnight. When I asked other old members of the company how and why Burney got off so easily for his absences, I was told, in tones that discouraged further questioning:

"Shut up!"

Once I asked Burney himself, and the reply, given without any show of indignation or other emotion, was:

"None of your business."

One day, while I was wondering aloud about Burney in the presence of a veteran to whom I had just given a large plug of captured tobacco (as I did not use the weed), the veteran said:

"If you'll keep still about it afterward, I'll tell you what you want to know about Burney. He's really a spy, although we call him a scout. There are several of our men in the same business."

Now if there was any man more than another that I wanted to see and know all about, it was a spy. Had known spy and a distinguished general called on me at one and the same time, the general would have had to cool his heels. I determined to corner Burney and pump a lot of romances from his memory. Fortune soon favored me, for one day our company did the cavalry picketing of a road, and while the relief to which Burney and I belonged was not on post, the veteran suggested that we should go outside the lines, find a farmhouse, and trade some coffee or salt for onions or sweet potatoes to vary the monotony of camp fare. We started, and I was not astonished that we passed the outposts without being questioned, for of course a spy could go where he liked, even if a raw recruit chanced to be with him. Within five minutes I blurted out:

"Burney, I know your secret—that you're a spy—a scout, I mean. But don't fear; I won't betray you."

"Won't, eh? Well, how in thunder could you? We're not in the Confederate army, are we?"

Evidently I had made a mistake, so I talked industriously to get out of it. Burney listened a little while, then he said:

"I s'pose you think there's something secret about my work? Something mysterious about my position in camp? But there isn't—not a bit of it. Once in a while I go out for some information, just as some others of our men do. That's all."

"Do tell me about one of your trips—only one. I'll promise never again to ask you for another story."

"That's letting me off easy," said Burney, after a moment of reflection, "and I'd take you at your word if there was anything to tell. But there isn't anything worth telling. Let—me—see; what on earth did I see and do on my last trip?"

"That's just what I want to know. Tell me all of it, from beginning to end, and I'll trust myself to find some romance in it. You're so used to adventures that you——"

"Adventures be hanged! I tell you that there aren't any in the business, except where you find them in books. About that last trip now: I started while the company was on picket, so there would be some one to lead my horse back to camp. It was night, and I went out on foot between two of our outposts, just as any man from the enemy's side might have slipped in between them."

"Did you carry a rifle or revolvers?"

"Neither. I was going for information, not to fight. Besides, I had to be in condition to pretend that I was a deserter from the Union army, if I could gain anything by it, or save myself from trouble, and deserters don't make a show of weapons.

"I went through fields and woods, keeping as close as possible to the road, so as to hear any body of troops that might be moving, but I walked carefully, so as not to be heard by any one who was not specially listening. I was making for the hut of a colored man who lives two or three miles this side of the river. I'd made friends with him, during one of our scouts, by giving him a little salt and promising more in a few days if he would get me some information that was worth anything. Salt is awfully scarce and high-priced in the Confederacy, so a nigger has a hard time in getting any for his meat. Well, my darky wasn't at home, so I went on."

"What did you want to find out?"

"Oh, anything that was going on. In some places horses and forage is being collected; in others wagon-loads of smoked meats are on their way to the Confederate army. In some other place recruiting or conscripting is going on; perhaps, too, an officer or two of the Southern army may be home on leave of absence. Information about any such things may start our regiment out to gobble something, and to weaken the enemy to the extent of what is gobbled. Well, finally I reached a little town, and lounged about, asking questions."

"But how did you know the Union men from the others?"

"I didn't know them apart. I wasn't looking for Union men, anyway; I was looking for information. I wasn't fool enough to talk politics. I pretended to be a reb, and on my way to Richmond to collect a note due to old Knighton—you remember him?—he has a farm near our camp. I had the note with me, too, to prove my yarn; it's a note the old man gave me to collect, for a commission, if we chance to get into Richmond during one of our raids."

"But what did you do when the enemy's soldiers questioned you?"

"There weren't any of them to question me; the South has no soldiers to spare for little, out-of-the-way places. Well, an hour or two of chat with the man I put up with that night, got me all the information worth having, from that part of the country. In return, I gave him such

crooked stories about things down this way, that the enemy will have hard work to straighten them out, when they get them."

"Then you had to lie?"

"'Twasn't lying," Burney retorted. "'Twas war."

"Ah! Go on."

"I learned that there was a grist mill a mile or two away, full of wheat and corn, to be ground for the enemy's commissary department. I also found out where there were about a dozen good horses, to go to the Johnnies' artillery. It did make my heart ache, not to be able to sneak those horses away and bring them into our camp."

"That would have been stealing."

"Not a bit of it! It would have been war. Still, I got some consolation in slipping out of the house that night, finding the grist mill, and setting it afire. I made a thorough job of it, too."

"Of course you made yourself scarce after firing the mill?"

"Of course I did nothing of the kind. That would have fastened suspicion upon me, so that I could never have gone into that neighborhood again. No, sir; I was back in the house and fast asleep again before daylight, and of course I hadn't been missed. Next day I got the job of driving one of several carts that were loaded with bacon for the Johnny rebs at Petersburg, and I didn't have to make any explanations along the road, for the bacon-cart was sufficient passport."

"And at Petersburg you made drawings of the forts and counted the enemy's soldiers, and took important papers from the Southern commander's headquarters."

"Oh, say! What sort of war stories have you been reading? How do you suppose a farmer soldier, as I pretended to be, could get at a commanding officer's papers? As to the forts, I got into only one of them, and couldn't have got there if I hadn't made an excuse to see old Knighton's son, whose regiment I knew the number of. I was going to give him a bogus message from his family, and pump some information out of him."

"How did you have the heart to play so mean a trick upon a man?"

"I didn't have it, for Knighton wasn't in the fort; his company was somewhere else that day, and I didn't want to get into trouble by having to ask my way about the lines. Still, I picked up some information that may be useful if ever we get close to Petersburg. Two or three days later I reached camp and reported. You can't see much adventure and romance in that story, can you?"

"No, but you must have left out part of it. How about the Union men who were glad to see you? Besides, you must have met some beautiful Southern women, and——"

"Hang women!" growled Burney. "If it wasn't for a woman I might be a good deal more useful on such trips than I am."

"Tell me about her, please, and let me see if you're not mistaken."

"'Twas this way—don't you ever dare to breathe a word of this to any of the boys, if you don't want your throat cut. One night when I was outside the lines I stopped at a house to beg for something to eat; I was almost starved. The only people in the house were a woman and her little boy; the youngster was down with a hard fever, so, of course, his mother was half crazy. She had no near neighbors; her husband had been killed in one of the early battles of the war, there wasn't a doctor within ten miles, nor was there any place to get medicines.

"Well, I've done a lot of nursing among our folks at home, and I know pretty well what to do in cases of fever, and I'm never without some medicine about my clothes in this swampy country, where a man never knows what day and hour the ague may strike him. I told the little woman that if she wouldn't let any one know of my presence, then or afterward, I'd help her pull the youngster through.

"She promised, and she got a good long sleep, while I looked after the youngster for two days and nights. In her waking moments I learned all she knew about Southern soldiers and stores in all the country around. Then I departed, promising to hurry back with some more medicine from Richmond; the child's symptoms bothered me. I kept my word about the medicines, although I got them in our own camp; at the same time I gave our colonel the information that put him on the track of those fifty Johnnies and horses he scooped—you remember?

"Our regimental surgeon said that the symptoms I described meant typhoid fever, so you may be sure it took a lot of work to keep the little chap alive. It took a lot of medicine, too, which frequently took me back to camp. The woman was so grateful for what I was doing, and she believed my story so thoroughly, that she took long trips on foot to find out what was going on that might interest me; she would have tramped day and night, I believe, to keep me near the child.

"Little by little the boy—a chap barely big enough to talk a few words, began to get well, and he and I got very fond of each other. I taught the mother more about cooking for sick folks than she'd ever known before, and our surgeon gave me tonics for her, for she had got awfully run-down in her anxiety over her youngster. Well, that woman's gratitude got too big for her to put into words, so she put it into her face, and just let me tell you, my boy, that a woman never looks better than when her heart is full of thankfulness about something."

"Yet all this time you were playing double with her."

"Bosh! Don't you suppose I've ordinary human feelings? I was awfully, honestly sorry for her, and I meant what I said when I promised to save her boy for her—as I did. Where was I?—confound you, you've nearly made me miss the point of the story, but here it is. By something I had said, without any purpose, she knew that I wasn't a married man. One day she mistook for earnest a bit of banter such as men are always giving to women, and she let me know—very modestly and prettily, too, that her heart and hand and little farm were mine whenever I chose to claim them."

"Oh, Burney. And you said there was no romance in spying. Go on. What next?"

"What next? Why, I found my best source of information completely ruined—yes, sir, completely ruined. I couldn't accept her offer—I couldn't pretend to, for all the information in the world. I was ready to do almost anything for the Union, but I drew the line at make-believe love—playing with a woman's heart. I told her it never would do—that she was worthy of the love of the best man alive! I meant it, too, for I'm a pretty fair judge of human nature, even if I am a homely old bachelor. I told her that it would be criminal for a fellow whose chances of being killed were specially good to even let himself fall in love, and tell a woman of it, until the war ended. She promised to wait for me, but I protested; I said I'd surely be killed, as my work was extra hazardous. The upshot of it is that I daren't go near that house again; I've set up a yarn, through the colored man I spoke of, to make her believe me dead, and I know it won't make her happy. Hang the luck,"

Burney looked so unhappy that I was almost sorry that I had begged for the story. I was glad when I saw a house a little way ahead, and Burney had something new to talk about.

"An old minister lives there," said he, "so I guess we're not likely to be shot at. It's always best to be on the safe side, though, so hold up your haversack—that's the flag-of-truce sign for soldiers who want to do any trading."

We rode slowly up to the house, Burney cautioning me against dismounting. "It's Southern style," he said, "for a visitor on horseback to keep his saddle until somebody comes out of the house and says something. I wish somebody would come quick, for we've been away from the reserve an awful long time, and I'll bet——"

What Burney had intended to bet was never learned, for as he spoke the front door of the house flew open and a plainly dressed woman with a radiant face dashed down the steps, shouting:

"You're alive! You're not dead!"

Burney looked more dead than alive as the woman leaned against the horse and him, kissed his hand again and again, and looked up at him with happy eyes, which nevertheless were full of tears.

"How pale you look!" she continued. "It's easy to see that you've been very sick. You ought not to be out of your bed. Oh, if Georgie and I could have known where you were after all you have done for us!"

Burney answered not a word, but continued to look as if about to drop from his saddle and die.

"You shan't go away from me again," the woman continued, "until I have the right to care for you. You saved the life of my child; you saved mine! 'Tis my right and my duty to save yours! Don't shake your head at me in that way and make such strange faces and nods toward your companion. I'm not ashamed of what I am saying. I'd be glad to have the whole world know that I love you and worship you, and won't be separated from you again!"

"Listen to me—carefully," said Burney, in a hoarse whisper. "You can see that I am on duty. I've no time for anything or any one—not even for you, who are the best woman I ever knew, God bless you!"

"Then I shall follow you—Georgie and I! We will take our chances."

"A camp is no place for a woman and a child," Burney answered. "Besides, you really don't know anything about me. I can tell you something that will make you hate me at once and forever—I shall have to do it, too. All I ever did for you and your sick boy I was fully in earnest about; I've got a heart, like any other human being. But, I've been the worst liar you ever heard of. I never told you the truth about anything except yourself and your child. I never was a Confederate scout, nor a Confederate of any kind; I'm a Union spy, and I glory in it. There!"

"No matter what you are or have been, if you will be my husband."

"You shall have your way," said Burney rapidly; "I call my friend here to witness that I say it—you shall have your way the very first day that I can get the time to find you and take you to a minister, but——"

"The time is now," the woman interrupted, "for this very house belongs to a minister. I am here only by accident, or brought here by a special Providence, for I wanted to consult the good old man about some matters that he understands. Georgie? O—o—oh, Georgie!"

A small boy came to the door, stared an instant at the spectacle before him, shouted "Papa man!" and hurried to his mother, who still leaned against Burney's saddle.

"Tell Elder Gray to come out here—at once," said his mother. Burney looked at me desperately yet sheepishly; then he looked earnestly down at the woman, who returned his gaze with a happy, modest smile. She was so unlike any woman I had ever read about in a book, that I couldn't be sure as to what to think of her ways and doings. In a moment or two the child returned with an old and very deliberate man.

"Elder," said the woman, "this is the good man I told you about. He isn't dead, although he looks as if he had been not far from the grave. We want to be married."

"Misguided sister," exclaimed the minister severely, "would you marry an enemy of your country?"

"I'll marry the man who saved my child's life, and saved mine at the same time."

"I cannot prevent you," sighed the minister.

Burney slipped from his horse; I, feeling that I was his "best man," dismounted and removed my hat, which I afterward learned was bad form at a military wedding out-of-doors. The simple ceremony was soon ended; Burney kissed his bride, who threw her arms around his neck; then suddenly the pallor departed from Burney's face, and the plain, matter-of-fact, middle-aged chap actually looked handsome. But suddenly his manner changed again; looking sharply at me, he said:

"Hurry back to the station; go right on to the regiment, and tell the colonel—nobody else—what you've seen."

"Burney, I won't stir until you give me your word and oath, before your wife and this minister, that you are not going to desert to the enemy." (Other men—good men, too, of our command—had married Southern women and afterward deserted.)

Burney snatched his pistol from his belt, pointed it at me, and said, very slowly and distinctly:

"Do as I said! Don't put your hand to your revolver! Mount! Go!"

I went. The colonel looked greatly troubled when I made my report. Three days later I was doing picket duty on another road, when I heard, about dusk, a movement in some bushes near me. I challenged; there seemed something familiar in the voice that answered:

"Friends, but without the countersign."

"Advance—one, and be identified."

An unarmed figure came slowly toward me. When it was within several paces, I again shouted:

"Halt!"

"Don't you know me, you stupid fellow?" was the reply. "I'm Burney; the others are my wife and little boy. I've been prowling the outposts all day, to find which one you were on, and when I would have to strike it to get in under the darkness."

"I should think you'd have come by daylight when nobody'd have made you any trouble. The whole regiment knows you by sight and name."

"Yes, but they don't know—*them*," drawled Burney. "I think the older a man is when he marries, the more afraid he is of being laughed at by his friends. You're going to pass us in, though?"

"Certainly, and you'll have no trouble to make your way through the camp from here. Where are the other two?"

"About a quarter of a mile back the road, on my horse. I'll hurry back and lead them up. Say! How did the colonel take the news?"

"He looked doubtful and troubled. But see here, Burney—what made you look and act so strangely the other day, right after you were married?"

"Why, the truth is, I was a little afraid of myself, I felt so unusual. The fact is, it was the first time in my life that a woman's arms had been around my neck, and I didn't know what might come of it."

Then he got his wife and child and they passed into camp and were lost to my view in the gloom.

THE MYSTERY MAN

By FRANCIS WORCESTER DOUGHTY

"OF course the biggest part of what is said and written about us is all nonsense," remarked the old ward detective, opposite to whom I found myself sitting at the corner table in a certain basement restaurant in the old French quarter of New York one summer evening. "I've been on the force these twenty years, and candidly confess I've never had a single hairbreadth escape in all that time, yet there are those who do have them—it's just as liable to strike a man who ain't a detective as one who is—and I know for a fact that true stories could be told of odd happenings in this great city which for real interest would rival anything ever written, but the trouble is they would never be believed.

"Tell you one?" he continued when I mildly offered the suggestion. "Well, no; I don't care to. I'm out for business, not for talk or story-telling—— Hold on, though! There was an odd adventure in which a friend of mine happened to be mixed up that made such an impression on my mind that I wrote it out. True, too, every word of it, though you mightn't believe it. Like to hear it? I think I've got the thing about me now."

Of course I wanted to hear it. It was in the hope of getting a story out of him that I had asked the old wardman to join me at the *table d'hôte*.

So when he produced a few crumpled sheets of manuscript and smoothed them out upon the table I called for fresh cigars, lit one, leaned forward over the table and listened while he read.

He began emptying his pockets upon the table. Besides the diamonds there were rubies, emeralds and other gems.

Probably no class of tradesmen in New York City have more to do with cranks, would-be swindlers and odd characters generally than do the wholesale diamond dealers on John street and Maiden Lane.

Josephs & Morgan, one of the wealthiest houses in the trade, had their share of such visitors, and enjoyed the reputation of never having made a loss through them, and yet always treating them with perfect civility, which is necessary, for sometimes good business is done with this class, especially those who call to sell, from whom stones of real value are often obtained far below the market price.

Many diamond houses refuse to deal with these people, fearing stolen goods and subsequent trouble, but the three shrewd men composing the firm of Josephs & Maggoun were in no wise particular so long as they saw a dollar in the transaction.

In fact, "queer" stones were rather a specialty with them, though it was generally understood that they always kept on the right sight of the law.

On a certain August afternoon when all New York was sweltering and the diamond business—in common with every other line of trade which did not depend upon hot weather for success—was at its lowest ebb, the door of Josephs & Maggoun's office opened and a man entered who for five years and more had been an occasional caller at the place.

Harlow Blakeman, the head clerk of the establishment, who had been flirting with pretty Nellie Lea, the typewriter, was ready for business at once.

He hurriedly took his place behind the green baize-covered counter, greeting the visitor in his usual cheerful way.

His cheery good-afternoon was returned merely by a nod.

The visitor shuffled across the floor with an uncertain, ambling step, his eyes fixed upon Harlow and the counter as though he had miles to travel before reaching them, and when at last he did reach the end of his journey he grasped the counter with both hands and stood there panting for breath.

He was a tall man, of uncertain age and marvelous leanness, with a face so thin and haggard that any one could have excused Mr. Maggoun for calling him a "walking corpse."

His dress was strictly that of a gentleman. His air had a certain military suggestion about it. But no tailor on earth could have made a fit for such a form, and the clothes hung baggily about his long limbs. This fact was

rendered more noticeable by a certain nervous tremor which kept the man's whole body in constant movement, yet so slight as to be scarcely apparent.

To these peculiarities one more may be added. This man would never permit any one to wait on him but Harlow Blakeman.

In the office he was known as the "King of Diamonds," but what his name actually was, or where or how he lived, no one in the diamond trade—and all knew him—had the faintest idea.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Blakeman," he said slowly. "You see I am here again."

"So I see," replied Harlow. "What have you got for us to-day?"

"As fine a stone as you ever laid your eyes on, young man. A real old mine gem of the purest water; its weight is two carats a half and a sixtenth. I've sold you bigger stones before, and likely enough shall again, but you never saw a diamond which carries with it such a flash as this."

This was the usual tale of the man, and it is only just to say that his statements, regarding the stones he offered for sale, were generally correct.

He produced the gem, wrapped up in many folds of tissue paper.

As far as Harlow's knowledge of the business went it was all he claimed for it, but Harlow was not a diamond expert, although he was learning rapidly.

Consequently while the young man was always ready to sell, he did not buy. The diamond was taken to J. L. Josephs to be weighed and appraised.

"Who is it?" asked Mr. Josephs, hastily surveying the stone.

"The King of Diamonds, sir."

"Huh! Dat man again, already? He vas here last mont'—used to be he only come tevice a year. No madder. He nefer make no droubles. I'd like to find out, dough, vere he get all dese diamonds. Ask him eef he can bring in a mate to dis. I haf a gustomer who would dake two."

Then the price was fixed—less than half the real value of the gem—and the money paid, for the King of Diamonds never haggled over the offer.

"I can bring in six just like it, if he wants them," he said. "Thank you, Mr. Blakeman. I am very much obliged."

"How are you feeling?" asked Harlow. "Seems to me you look better than you used."

"Then my looks don't tell the truth," was the reply. "I never was so weak and nervous and broken up as I am at the present moment. There ain't much left in life for me, Mr. Blakeman, but there'll be plenty left for you—after I'm gone."

What did he mean?

Harlow Blakeman stared at him in a puzzled way.

But the mystery man offered no explanations. He shuffled to the door and departed, leaving Harlow to listen to his uncertain footsteps as he descended the stairs.

"Did you hear that speech, Nellie?" asked Harlow, turning to the typewriter.

"Yes, indeed I did. What do you suppose he meant by it?"

"Give it up! He's half-cracked, anyhow. But I can't say anything. He's always most friendly with me!"

Here the conversation was interrupted by the ringing of Mr. Maggoun's bell, which meant that he wanted to dictate a letter.

Nor was it resumed when Blakeman and the pretty typewriter found themselves walking up Broadway together after business hours, for Harlow had something of far more importance to speak of then.

Love making?

Well, yes. But not in so many words. That had begun years before when these two had worked side by side in a telegraph office; before Harlow, having escaped from a slavish position which afforded him a bare existence, had drawn Nellie Lea after him, bettering her fortunes as well as his own.

They understood each other perfectly; that each loved the other was no secret between them. So far it went and no further. Harlow Blakeman had not advanced a step in his suit in five years.

"Nellie, why will you not let me visit you—why will you not tell me where you live?" he said, breaking in abruptly upon a general conversation. "Do you know I am beginning to lose hope; beginning to think that the time will never come when——"

"Don't, Harlow!" interrupted the girl. "You don't know how badly you make me feel. We have gone over all this so many times. As matters stand, there can be nothing between us, but the day may come——"

"The same old story, Nellie. Always the same mystery. If I was like other fellows, I'd break my promise and follow you. I could find out where you live easily enough if I chose, and ten to one I should find that this wall of mystery you have built up between us could be just as easily broken down."

"But you won't. It's for your own sake I keep my secret. You are too much of a man to break your promise," said the girl, her black eyes flashing.

"Perhaps I've done it already, Nellie."

"What!"

"Oh, I don't say I have, but——"

"Then if you have, it will do you no good. I moved yesterday. I am constantly moving. Go and inquire for me at my old lodgings, if you have traced them out, and you will have your labor for your pains. Good-evening, Mr. Blakeman. Follow me now, if you dare!"

And she left him abruptly, pushing on through the crowd.

Harlow bit his lip in vexation. He would have hurried on and tried to overtake her, but he knew the girl's independent nature too well for that.

He had not broken the promise given years before, nor had he the slightest intention of doing it now. He had merely been bluffing her.

Eleven o'clock that evening found Harlow Blakeman sauntering through Union Square on his way to the furnished room which he had occupied for a year or two past.

He was about to turn into Fourth avenue when his attention was suddenly arrested by a little knot of people collected around a park policeman, who held a man by the arm.

"Where do you live?" Harlow heard the policeman saying. "Sure, if you ain't drunk, then you're sick. Annyhow, you're not able to take care of yourself, and if I let you go you'll have another tumble. I'll have to take you in."

"The mystery man!" Harlow mentally exclaimed, catching sight of the prisoner's face.

He pushed his way up to the policeman.

With trembling eagerness his hand was seized.

"Mr. Blakeman! Help me!" gasped the old man. "You understand my condition. Explain matters to this policeman."

"Why certainly!" cried Harlow in his hearty way. "Officer, this gentleman is a friend of mine. It will be all right. He's been this way for years."

He drew the old gentleman's arm within his own and walked him slowly to the avenue.

"Mr. Blakeman, how can I ever thank you?" he said as they walked along.

"By saying nothing about it. What was the matter?"

"Weakness—just weakness. I slipped and fell and wasn't able to get up again quite as quick as the policeman thought I ought to."

Then the voice was lowered into a hurried half-frightened whisper.

"Mr. Blakeman, would you object to seeing me home?"

"Why, certainly not. Where do you live? Remember, I don't even know your name."

"Fosston is my name. Colonel Fosston, if you please. I was once a British officer—but no matter, that is long ago. I live on East Twenty-third street, way down near the East River. If you have any pity for a man whose doom is sealed, but who has thoroughly respected you for years, take me to my room."

"Bless me, you needn't put it so strong as that, colonel," replied Harlow heartily. "We'll stroll up Fourth avenue and take a Twenty-third street car. By the way, perhaps if you were to take a drop of something it might strengthen you, and——"

"No! I never drink."

"Is that a fact?"

"Nor do I ever smoke. My dissipation takes another form, Mr. Blakeman. Support me a moment. No one is looking. But stay! Before you consent, I must warn you —*your life may be in danger if you go home with me tonight.*"

"He's way off," thought Harlow, and he inwardly laughed at the suggestion.

He was confirmed in his view of the case when Colonel Fosston with trembling hand produced a tiny syringe, and stripping up his left sleeve showed an arm disfigured by many scars.

"Morphine?" shuddered Harlow.

"Yes."

"You'd better not. But, of course, you know best."

"I've forgotten more about the effects of morphine than you'll ever know in a hundred years, Blakeman. My dear fellow, I'm long past danger. If I didn't do it I would die."

Then he ran the needle under the cuticle and pressed the end.

"Heavens!" thought Harlow a moment later. "What a change!"

He would never have known the mystery man for the same person now.

With sparkling eyes and firm tread Colonel Fosston walked up the avenue—walked all the way down East Twenty-third street, never pausing in the most entertaining conversation Harlow had ever listened to, until they reached one of that row of ancient English basement houses which set back from the street just below—well, we won't say what avenue. Here he opened the door with a latchkey, groped his way up the dark staircase, and ushered Harlow into the rear room on the top floor.

"They ought to keep a light in the hall," remarked Harlow. "Some night you'll break your neck on those dark stairs."

"Who ought?"

"The people of the house."

"There are none. I'm the only person in this house except yourself. I've lived here alone for years."

He struck a match and lighted the gas, and started back with a low, stifled cry.

"It has come at last! At last! I knew the warning was not for nothing! Let it come! I give up! I can fight no longer! Let them kill me and take all! I am tired—tired out!"

Thus muttering, Colonel Fosston threw himself in a chair, dropping his arms across a small camp table, and buried his face in his hands.

For several moments he neither moved nor spoke—moments which gave Harlow a chance to take in his surroundings.

They were simple enough except for one marked peculiarity; the walls of the room were literally covered with playing cards.

Pack upon pack had been nailed upon the shabby paper, but not *as* packs; they were in every variety of fanciful form, arranged according to suit and kind. Thus there were squares of aces, heart-shaped figures of Jacks, circles of cards of lower value, etc. There seemed to be no end to the combinations thus formed, and among others Harlow did not fail to notice one diamond-shaped figure, fully a foot across from point to point, made up entirely of kings, with the king of diamonds for a center piece. This was over the chimney-piece, but there was nothing peculiar about it, beyond the fact that it was the only figure in which the king of diamonds appeared. This, however, Harlow did not observe at the time.

As for the rest, there was no carpet on the floor, no furniture except a cot bed, two chairs, the table and a cooking stove, with dishes in a cupboard in one corner, and here and there a few odds and ends, all suggesting plain living to the last degree.

Harlow was puzzled. He hardly knew what to do or say. But he was spared further thought after a moment, for Colonel Fosston sprang up, exclaiming:

"It's all right. Don't get rattled. I'm no lunatic!" Then he closed and locked the door.

"Listen to me, Blakeman," he said. "I want you to stay by me till morning, then it will all be over. Do you agree?"

"Well, really——" began Harlow.

"Don't say no. You must! I don't threaten. It ain't for you."

He thrust his hand into his hip pocket and laid a revolver upon the table. Then by the side of the revolver he tossed down a curious silver coin, old and worn, bearing an inscription in strange characters.

"That's my last warning," he said. "They promised I should have it. They've found me and have kept their word. You'll stay, of course, Blakeman? You are brave —I know—I've been watching you, my boy—I've had my eye on you for years. Only fellow in New York who ever has a civil word for me! Tut! Tut! Don't speak. I may be a morphine fiend, but I'm no fool. Here, take a nip of this whisky, it will brace you up. You may need it before morning. Help yourself. I never touch it. I'll take another injection—that'll do the business for me."

Thus he rattled on, giving Harlow no chance to speak. A bottle of excellent whisky and a glass went on the table, and a box of cigars went with it. Rejecting the former, Harlow lit a cigar. He was unable to repress a shudder as he saw the deadly syringe again applied to that horribly scarred arm.

"You can't expect me to stay here unless you explain yourself," he said. "This is all Greek to me. Who do you fear? What is it all about?"

"All about these, my dear fellow," cried the colonel, whose face had undergone the same marvelous transformation a second time. "Look! Watch me! You'll understand in part. As for the rest, I'll explain—when the blow is about to strike. It may not strike—then I shall never explain."

As he spoke he began emptying his pockets upon the table. Harlow's business side was excited now.

Diamonds! They came from every pocket, of which

there seemed to be no end. Many of them were of fair size and came out loose, others were small and in the regulation blue papers of the dealer. Besides the diamonds there were rubies, emeralds and other gems, but no very large diamonds were seen among them when the collection was complete.

"That is what it's all about!" repeated the colonel. "They are after—they are after these—have been these ten years. Three times they've struck me, but each time I've contrived to escape—that Indian rupee is the warning; they've served it fair as they said they would; they've given me my chance for life, but if I were to go on the street now I'd surely meet them, and to meet them means death. Come, Blakeman, you're a diamond man, what's all that stuff worth?"

"Thousands, if they are all like what you have been selling us."

"Not all, but many are. Here they go. He swept the entire collection into a small canvas bag and drew the string.

"Turn your back a minute, Blakeman," he said. "On your honor don't look."

Harlow obeyed. He thought of the door then—of escape. But somehow he could not bring himself to desert this man in his trouble after having known him for so many years. Moreover, his curiosity was excited—his love of adventure. He thought fast, listening as the colonel shuffled about behind him, and the result was he determined to "see it out."

"Now!" cried the colonel suddenly.

Harlow looked around. The bag had vanished.

"Perhaps it's safe—perhaps it ain't," the colonel rattled on in that desultory fashion, peculiar to victims of the morphine habit. "Now, then, Blakeman, will you stand by me in my danger or not? It rests with you. I tell you plainly I expect an attack from old enemies. I expect they are in this house now. Stand by till morning and you will earn my everlasting gratitude. Don't say police to me—don't propose anything. Just say yes or no."

"Well, it's yes, then," said Harlow. "I won't desert you. So there!"

"Good! I knew it! See here—take this envelope and put it in your pocket; to be returned in case everything is all right by sunrise. Yours to keep in case I die. That's right; stow it away. Now, then, I'll light a lamp, and we'll search the house. You take the revolver. I suppose you haven't one of your own."

This was true enough. Harlow, whose experience with revolvers had been confined to Fourth of July practice, handled the weapon rather gingerly as they went through the empty rooms, in which nothing was to be discovered but bare walls, and floors, cobwebs and dust.

At last they were back in the colonel's own apartment again, with the door locked behind them.

"You must surely be mistaken," said Harlow. "We've searched thoroughly; there's nobody in the house but ourselves."

"Maybe—it makes no difference. If they want to get in they'll find a way; they've been here once, they can come again."

"But you have no evidence of their visit but the coin."

"It's enough. I know what you are thinking about—that I'm morphine mad, and left the coin there myself. That's all right, but never mind. Come, join me in a game of cuchre and we'll watch; every door is bolted, every window nailed down except these two here, which, of course, are too high up to be dangerous. You play, I suppose? What do you say?"

Harlow did play a quiet game once in a while of an evening with friends.

Just as the colonel had produced a new pack of cards a wild shriek rang out. It was horrible to listen to—it brought Harlow to his feet with a bound.

Colonel Fosston looked at Harlow and then burst into a loud laugh.

"There! there! Sit down!" he exclaimed. "That's nothing. It scared me last night, though. It's only a poor crazy woman who has just moved in next door, and whose room adjoins this. I looked in on the folks downstairs this morning, and they explained the mystery. The poor creature is way off, has been for years; has two daughters, one lame, who stays with the mother, while the other does the bread winning. Sad case. I mean to help 'em if I'm spared. I begged the woman not to turn 'em out on my account. Come, it's your deal. We'll make it a dollar limit out of respect to what I suppose to be the condition of your pocketbook. Well, what sort of a hand have you got? Do you go in?"

Yes, Harlow went in then and he went in many times in the hour which dragged slowly by.

At first he had all he could do to hold his own against his peculiar opponent, who proved a splendid player, and he at last found himself some twenty dollars behind the game. Then fortune changed and he began to win. Colonel Fosston grew weak and trembling; his eyes lost all their brightness; his hand shook so that he could scarcely hold the cards.

No allusion had been made to the mystery.

"I've got to have another injection," groaned the colonel, looking at the clock on the mantel, which marked ten minutes past one. "It ain't time for half an hour, but I'm an old hand at bluffing death by morphine. I'll risk it. I guess it's safe."

The syringe was applied again, but not with the usual effect. There was no brightening of the eyes—no change except for the worse.

"I'm sleepy, Blakeman," he muttered thickly; "so sleepy—I must lie down for a moment—only one. Never mind, old man—they won't come to-night—no—it's safe—you know what it all means—I'm a cashiered colonel in the Seventy-ninth—yes—we robbed the Brahmin Temple at Bhoompore way up above Delhi, out in India—they were in it with me—Sergeant Latimer and the little Thug—we got all the diamonds belonging to the priests—tried to get the big ones in the eyes of the idol, but we didn't make it, they say I didn't divide fair, but it's a lie—I took all—ha! ha! All!"

His head sank upon his breast—his indistinct mutterings ceased.

No call could arouse the mystery man now.

Harlow, realizing the danger, was already working over him, shaking him, pulling him this way and that, trying in every way to arouse him, but all to no purpose, for the man's hand had been unsteady when he took the last injection. The overdose which he had secretly dreaded for years was in his veins at last.

"I must have help here!" thought Harlow. "This man is dying! He was mad when he met me! This talk of secret enemies is all a part of it. I must fetch a doctor if he's to be saved."

He started for the door, but before he could reach it a slight noise was heard behind him—such a noise as the raising of a window would make.

Harlow Blakeman's heart was in his throat as he turned.

The window *was* open. Two men stood outside looking in—stood on the roof of the extension to an old deserted factory, fronting on Twenty-fourth street, which came

close up under it—a danger which, for some inexplicable reason, Colonel Fosston had not taken into account.

One was a tall, heavily built man, dressed like a sailor, the other a thin, wiry fellow, with long hair, wicked little eyes, black skin, yet not a negro—a Hindu beyond a doubt.

No word was spoken as they leaped into the room.

The revolver still lay on the table, and Harlow made a spring to get it, but his movement was anticipated by the sailor—the revolver was not for him.

Then, with amazing quickness, the Hindu threw out his hand—a cord flew through the air, a noose dropped about Harlow's neck and was pulled taut, though not sufficiently so to interfere with his breathing; but the Hindu kept hold of the end, and Harlow did not dare to move, for one pull on the cord would have finished him—that he realized only too well.

"What do you want here?" he gasped, and he might have attempted to say more, but the sailor instantly cut him short.

"Now look here, my lad," he said, speaking with a strong English accent, "we've been a-watching you. We've got nothing against you. We don't mean to kill you 'less you make us. We want our own, that's all. He's off in one of his morphine fits, and I take charge of this here revolver. Where's the diamonds? Tell us and we're off, too."

But they were asking more than Harlow knew.

The sailor seemed to realize this after one or two further questions.

"I see you don't know," he said, "and so much the better for you that I'm willing to believe you. Back up against the wall there! Move, and Gharri pulls the cord, and it's all over with your bloomin' neck; but if you keep still no harm shall come to you, whether we find the diamonds or not."

From that moment Harlow was as silent as the Hindu, who so far had never uttered a sound, but just stood holding the end of the cord.

The sailor now proceeded to search the room. Everything was most carefully examined; even the walls were sounded, many of the cards being torn off.

"He can't have 'em on him," growled the sailor at last. "He carries 'em all day, but never at night—that I know—but I'll make sure that he hasn't changed his programme in this case."

He now approached Colonel Fosston, who had not changed his position, nor shown the least sign of life.

"Come, wake up and show us the diamonds! We don't want your life!" he said roughly, and then, as his hand touched the sleeper's forehead, sprang back.

"He's dead already!" he exclaimed. "Dead and cold! Bluffed by death, as I'm a sinner! Ah! What's that?"

It was the cry of the maniac again.

Wild and shrill it rang out upon the still night air.

No words could be distinguished—just the cry fearful in its intensity.

Perhaps it aroused the superstitious fear of the Hindu; perhaps the sailor looked for it to bring the police.

The cord was instantly dropped; both sprang through the window and ran over the roof, disappearing into the old factory beyond.

With the cry still ringing in his ears, Harlow Blakeman tore the cord from his neck, flung open the door, rushed downstairs and let himself out only to run into the arms of a ward detective who chanced to be passing and, hearing the cry, had mistaken the house from which it had come.

"And that ward detective," added my friend on the opposite side of the table, as he folded up the manuscript, "happened to be myself, and I want you to understand that it didn't take me long to surround the situation; the young fellow didn't have to tell me his story twice.

"Was the mystery man dead when we went upstairs? Why certainly he was—dead of an over-dose of morphine, and the unfortunate woman in the next house died that night.

"And now here's the end of the story; that woman turned out to be Nellie Lea's mother, for whom she had worked and toiled for years rather than send her to an asylum. This was the poor girl's life secret. Blakeman and I went in to find out what it all meant, and you ought to have seen the way he stood by and comforted her and the lame sister too. I don't know what they would have done without him then, and later when they came to have the funeral, and a year afterward he married her, and—what do you say? What became of the diamonds? Why, the paper in the envelope told us where to look.

"It turned out to be Colonel Fosston's will, and strange as it may seem, it left everything to Blakeman, and was dated back two years, so it shows how much of a liking he must have got up for my friend.

"The stones were worth about forty thousand dollars, and Blakeman might have kept them just as well as not, if he hadn't been so conscientious, for you see he was fool enough to write out to India and find where they belonged, which was easy, through Josephs & Maggoun's connections there, so he got a big reward and gave them up. We found them in a little cupboard built in the chimney, which was covered all over with the playing cards."

A good story coming in our next number is entitled "Cousins." The author is Robert H. F. White.

WHY LIGHTNING HITS CERTAIN TREES

THAT some kinds of trees are more likely to be struck by lightning than others, and for no apparent reason, is an old belief. The ancient Romans believed that mulberry, laurel, peach, larch and box trees were lightning proof. Not a few foresters of modern times are of the opinion that certain trees are more or less liable to destruction by lightning.

In a recent interview, Prof. Charles S. Sargent, director of the Arnold Arboretum, the living tree museum of Harvard University, is quoted as saying that "as a result of many years' observation he is convinced that the oak tree comes first among those most liable to be struck by lightning, the Scotch pine second, and perhaps the fir third."

Vanderlinden, the Belgian meteorologist, recently published the results of many years' systematic observations, which were made chiefly in Belgium. By subdividing the territory into five sections, this authority says he established that the different species of trees did not take the same rank in each section as regards greater liability of being struck by lightning, although the cottonwood seemed to be most frequently struck. Vanderlinden concludes from all observations that the height of the trees, especially of isolated ones, and the character of the bark have much to do with its liability to be struck by lightning bolts.

Foresters say that the tall cottonwood, with its rigid bark, is more apt to be struck than the lower beech.

MICKEY FINN TELLS FORTUNES

By ERNEST JARROLD

"How many people have I seen in the most terrible palpitations, for months together, expecting every hour the approach of some calamity, only by a little worm, which breeds in an old wainscot, and, endeavoring to eat its way out, makes a noise like the movement of a watch!"—Secret Memoirs of the late Mr. Duncan Campbell, 1732.

THE atmosphere in the Finn shanty on a recent August evening was peculiarly depressing. The fall rains had set in and water beat its liquid tattoo upon the window panes. Mr. Finn was two months in arrears for rent. As he sat by the table with his pipe in his teeth and his head in his hands he was lost in gloomy reflection. The plaintive voice of the billy-goat who had pressed himself closely against the chicken-coop to escape the water, added a deeper tinge to the gloom in the shanty. A diversion was caused by his son Mickey, who seated himself and spread a pack of cards out upon the table in rows, meanwhile consulting a little yellow book called "Napoleon's Oraculum."

"I'm afeered it's a gambler you are goin' to be," said Mr. Finn.

"You need have no fears, father," replied the boy. "It's only science I'm studyin', called cardiology."

"Well, Mickey, you are always up to divvilmint of some kind or other. But what's this cardiology like?"

"It's tellin' your fortune by cards," replied the boy. "Did you never hear of the Oracles of Delphi, father? Thim wonderful men that told fortunes by lookin' at the palms of your hands, or by boiling herbs in a pot, or goin' up on the roof and lookin' at the stars? Well, that's what I'm goin' to be, the Oracle of Cooney Island! I'll put up a sign on the door, sayin': 'Mickey Finn, Astrologer, Oracle and Fortune Teller of Cooney Island. Price 25 cents. Children half price.'"

Mr. Finn was becoming interested. Visions of wealth earned by his son came to him. When Mickey hung out his shingle he would no more be obliged to swing the heavy hammer in the gloomy quarry. But he realized that it would not be politic for him to reveal his feelings. Assuming a tone of cynicism, he said:

"Arrah, what's this nonsinse you're talkin' about, Mickey? Shure, you can't tell what's going to happen by lookin' at pieces of paper! Now, prove it to me, if ye can do it! What's the m'anin' of this card?" picking up the eight of diamonds and shaking it in his son's face.

Mickey smiled.

"You won't be mad if I tell you, father? You know it ain't me as is sayin' it, it's the cards."

"Usha, go on, boy!" exclaimed Mr. Finn. "It's only nonsinse annyhow."

"Well, then, if you musht know," said the boy, "the eight of diamonds means that you have a strong inclination to get drunk, and if you keep at it you will lose your health and your friends and your job and——"

"Hold on there, Mickey, that's enough for one turn," exclaimed Mr. Finn. "I'm sorry to say that's true. Did the card say that?"

"Faith it did, and more. Now, pick out another card, father, and I'll prophesy again for you."

By this time Mr. Finn was deeply interested. His hand hovered over the cards in doubt until at last with lingering dubity he picked up the four of spades.

Mickey's face wore a look of extreme gravity as he gazed upon the card. His mother and father were waiting eagerly for the Oracle to speak. But the Irish astrologer was anxious to deepen the impression he had already made and he prolonged the silence until it became unbearable to his parents. Rain beating upon the roof added impressiveness to the scene. Mickey raised his forefinger impressively. Then he said in a low, distinct whisper:

"I conjure you, oh, Saggitarius, in the name of Muthrattan, of Adonia, of Semiphoras and of Aristotle, to tell me what does the four of spades mean?"

There was such a look of solemnity on her son's face that Mrs. Finn was frightened. Said she:

"What are you doin', Mickey—talkin' to the divvil? Tell your father what's the m'anin' of the card."

"It manes——"

"Yis!" interrupted Mr. Finn.

"It manes," resumed the boy, "that you have a wart on the middle finger of your left hand."

There was a sigh of relief in the shanty.

"Faith, I thought you were goin' to tell me somethin' about death or ghosts," said Mr. Finn. "But you are the divvil himself for tellin' saycrets, Mickey. How did you know I had a wart?"

"Shure, the Oracles told me, father," said Mickey proudly. "And if you rub it with leaves of the assarabaca tree 'twill be cured."

"Assara—what's that, Mickey, and where will I get thim leaves?"

"The only place where the assarabaca tree grows is in Brahna-Pootra in Injy."

"Well, faith I can't go there for to get the leaves. What'll I do?"

"Begorra, father, you'll have to stay home and wear your wart. 'Tis the only thing you can do."

Meanwhile Mrs. Finn had been looking at the cards, evidently with the notion that she might discern some mystical meaning in them. Picking up the Joker, she exclaimed:

"Now, Mickey, that's a quare card intirely. What might that mane?"

Mickey shook his head mournfully. "I'm sorry you picked that card, mother," he said. "It manes trouble. That card says that a dark man is comin' here to-night. A big, tall man, wid rubber boots and an umbrella."

"And will the dark man bring bad news I dunno?" said his mother anxiously.

"Shure he will," replied the boy. "The worst news you will be hearin' in a long time. He will be very angry and he'll call father names and ballyrag him fearful. And father won't be able to take it up and clout him, bekase the dark man will take the law on him if he does."

"Can't you make him go away widout doin' any harrum, Mickey?" pleaded his mother. "You're afther makin' him come, bad luck to him! Mebbe you could make him go away wid the cards."

"I dunno if I could," replied the boy.

Turning to his father, he said:

"I suppose ye haven't such a thing as an odd rabbit's foot in your pocket?"

"Indeed, thin, I haven't," replied Mr. Finn dejectedly. "What would I do wid a rabbit's foot?"

"We might hoodoo the dark man wid it," replied Mickey.

"Faith, ye have manny quare words about you, Mickey," said Mr. Finn. "What's hoodoo?"

"Oh, it manes we'll make the dark man go away. We'll conjure him wid a spell or a dingus and frecken him. If we haven't a rabbit's foot, we'll have to try him wid a witch's incantation. Mebbe that'll fetch him."

"How'll we do it?" asked Mrs. Finn, in a tremor of expectation.

"Mother," said Mickey impressively, "you go and get one of your best Sunday stockings. Then father will take all the hearts and diamonds out of the pack and put them in the stocking."

When this was done Mickey took the stocking and whirled it around his head a dozen times. He seized the stocking by the toe as he made the last whirl and the cards flew all over the kitchen floor. He then blindfolded his mother with a towel, made several passes before her eyes, and said:

"In the name of Esculapius, Samson and Brian Boru, I conjure you to get down on your knees and pick up a card that'll drive the dark man away!"

Mrs. Finn dropped on her knees and began to feel along the floor. A creepy sensation ran up and down Mrs. Finn's back, while the rain beat against the window and the shutters banged portentously. Just at the edge of the oilcloth near the stove Mrs. Finn's fingers touched a piece of pasteboard. Picking it up she arose, tore the bandage from her and holding the card toward Mickey, eagerly said:

"Tell me quick, Mickey! What does the card say?"

"Hurroo!" exclaimed the boy, as he saw the king of hearts. "'Tis the best card in the pack for luck. It says that a Thing—I can't make out what kind of a Thing—will come afther the dark man and drive him away. This Thing has four legs, but I can't make out what shape it is, the Oracle don't make it plain to me. But annyhow, 'tis a friend of the family and it will help us to hoodoo the dark man."

"What time will he be here, Mickey?" asked his mother.

"He'll come soon after the dark man," said the astrologer, who had been told by the landlord in the afternoon, that he would call during the evening. Scarcely had he ceased speaking, when a loud rap was heard at the door. The three inmates of the shanty looked at each other apprehensively. Then Mr. Finn managed to muster up enough courage to open the door. Mrs. Finn screamed with fear, for there on the threshold stood the dark man in rubber boots, and with a dripping umbrella in his hand. He did not enter the shanty, but stood in the doorway in the glow of the lamp-light.

"Mr. Finn," he said sternly, "you are behind with you rent for two months now. Are you prepared to pay me to-night?"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Burgess, but times has been bad wid me, and——"

"The same old excuse, I see," said the landlord. "Well, I'll give you one more week to pay up and then in case of failure out go your traps upon the sidewalk."

Then occurred the strangest incident ever recorded in the annals of Coney Island. The Thing which Mickey had prophesied as the deliverer appeared. The storm had reached its height, and as if to signalize the climax of its intensity, a vivid flash of lightning rent the darkness, accompanied by an awful roar of thunder.

The billy-goat, who had been hiding behind the chicken-coop to escape the rain, was so badly frightened that he dashed toward the light streaming from the open door of the shanty, darted between the legs of the landlord and carried him bang! against the table. Mrs. Finn screamed, the landlord swore, thinking it was a plot to kill him, while a yell from the youthful Oracle rattled the crockery, and the landlord disappeared into the darkness on a run.

When the excitement had died away, Mrs. Finn looked at the young fortune-teller with love and admiration, exclaiming:

"Mickey, you're the divvil! Every word you said about thim cards kem true!"

MAKING MATCHES

THE first Lucifer or friction matches date back to 1829. They were made and dipped by hand, and sold for a little over two dollars per hundred.

To-day the same quantity may be bought for a couple of cents, or even less. This cheapness is due to the fact that all matches are made, and most of them are dipped by machinery.

In making matches by one process, a cylinder of pine wood the length of seven matches, which has been soaked in water to make it tough, is placed in a sort of lathe and as it revolves the circumference comes in contact with a sharp blade which cuts off a continuous shaving the thickness of a match. As this shaving comes away from the log it is cut into seven strips, each as wide as a match is long.

These ribbons are cut in lengths of about eight feet, and one hundred and twenty or so are piled on top of each other and fed into a cutting machine, which cuts as many splints at each stroke as there are ribbons in the pile.

Rapid as this process of making splints is, it has been displaced in America by another method in which very little hand work is required. In this case the raw material is received at the factory in the shape of a two-inch white pine plank. This is sawed into blocks the length of the match.

The blocks are then fastened by means of clamps to the bed of a machine and cutters groove out a set of splints from the surface. The cutters do not turn the entire surface into splints at one impact, but cut them out one-fourth of an inch apart. The ridges left between the places from which the first set of splints was cut are then worked up, and so on until the whole block is consumed.

As soon as the splints are separated from the block they are seized in iron clamp plates, which form an endless chain. The endless chain carries the splints across a steam-heated drum, which warms them nearly to the temperature of the paraffin, into which they are next dipped.

From the paraffin bath the splints move on continuously to the rollers that carry the "heading mixture"—phosphorus, chlorate of potash, etc.—and as the matches are carried past the rollers each one receives a red or blue head, as the case may be. From the rollers they continue on through a room swept by a blast of cold, dry air.

The matches move on until, just before they reach the starting point again, an automatic punch thrusts the matches out and places them side by side in a box, put in the right place at the right time by another endless belt.

It is estimated that the nations of the civilized world use, in round numbers, three million matches a minute.

WHY JOE SWORE OFF

By ED MOTT

WHEN Joe Binns swore off playing poker a good many of his friends were surprised. Some of them can't understand it yet. That must be because no one has told them about the succession of discouraging incidents that led Joe to take the astounding step.

Joe belonged to the school of inveterates. He played poker because he loved the game. With plenty of money and plenty of time, he was always ready to take a hand. Being human, he liked to win, but he loved so to see the game played right that he had rather lose to a man who bluffed him out cold like an artist, than to win of one who would have been winner himself if he hadn't played like a chump. Joe Binns could never understand a man who admitted that he couldn't play poker. It seemed to him to be a positive going against nature for a man to grow up without having learned to play the game. So it came to be a weakness of his to take charge of such benighted mortals, if he could, and teach them how to play. He thought a knowledge of poker so necessary a thing for the full enjoyment of life, that he insisted on teaching his mother and his sisters its mysteries, and even put his sweetheart through a thorough course of instruction in the game.

"Deuced sight better than thumping the piano," he said, "It disciplines your mind. It sets you to thinking. It makes you *en rapport*."

And so his sweetheart learned the game from him. One day she and one of Joe's sisters met during a shopping tour of the bargain counters.

"Oh, Mamie!" exclaimed the sister. "Did you ever see things so perfectly lovely and cheap?"

"Never," replied Mamie.

"But I wouldn't have had a chance at them at all but for Joe! I'm spending his money," said the delighted sister.

"The idea! So am I!" responded the equally delighted sweetheart. "Poker?"

"Yes! Joe insisted on mamma and all of us playing the other night. He wanted to improve us in the game, he said. By and by they all got tired and quit except Joe and I. Don't you love to see the picture cards in your hands, Mamie? I used to throw away those little one-spot things and draw other cards hoping I'd get picture cards in place of 'em, but Joe told me I mustn't do that, because it wasn't the game. By and by Joe raised my ante before we drew any cards. 'Just to give you a point or two,' he said. I raised him, and he said that was the way to do it. I was getting on just lovely, he said. We kept on raising back and forth until Joe quit and asked me how many cards I wanted. I only had two picture cards in my hand. Positively only two, and I drew three cards hoping to get more, and do you know, Mame, that horrid Joe never gave me one picture. All I got was two of those nasty little one things and an eight spot. Joe only took one card. The pot was just too lovely for anything. Joe bet twenty-five cents. One of my cards dropped on the floor. It was the eight. I reached down to get it, and I saw another card lying there—a perfectly sweet picture card looking right up at me. 'Oh!' I said to myself. 'How much lovelier that will look in my hand than that horrid black eight spot.' So I picked it up instead of the eight, and raised Joe half a dollar.

"'Better look out, my lady,' said Joe, 'or you won't have any pin-money left.'

"He raised me fifty, and it went on until the pot got

"Who is he?" asked Joe. "Who is he?" said the bill poster. "Why, he's Red-shirt Kelley, the king of three card monte men and all-around card sharp!"

to be just immense. I raised Joe's last bet two dollars! Just think, Mame! Wasn't I awful? Joe looked at me in surprise.

"'Well, you are getting on!' he said. 'I guess I'd better clip your wings right here.'

"He called me. I showed my hand—three lovely picture cards and the two disgusting one spots.

"'Great Scott, Jen!' Joe shouted. 'A king full on aces!'

"Then he showed his hand. He had five picture cards—the sweetest hand, Mame, you ever looked at! But three of 'em were only queens. The other two were jacks. To think my three picture cards with only the two horrid ace things should have beaten Joe's lovely hand. Wasn't it sweet?"

"Just—perfectly—elegant!" cried Mamie. "How delightful of you to find the picture card on the floor."

And the two guileless creatures laughed merrily.

"But how did you get Joe's money, Mame?" asked the sister.

"Joe was simply horrid last night," replied Mamie. "He sat down to give me another lesson in poker. He kept winning my chips until he had nearly two dollars' worth of them. I don't see how he could have been so awful. After a while, when Joe asked me how many cards I wanted, I said I would stay pat. Joe had given me a lesson two or three nights before in standing pat. He smiled when I said that.

"'A dangerous thing for a new beginner to do, my dear,' he said. 'New beginners don't understand the value of hands sufficiently to take the risk of standing pat. But go ahead. Maybe it'll be a good lesson for you. Don't get frightened.'

"I said faintly, when Joe made his bet, that I would raise him a dollar. He smiled again, and bet a dollar more. I said to Joe, uncertain like:

"'Is it right for me to say, 'I see your raise and go you two better?'

"'That's the proper phrase,' said Joe, looking a little dark, 'but I wouldn't say it if I were you.'

"But I did say it, and Joe straightened up and said he might as well let me learn by bitter experience, and raised my bet two dollars. And so we kept on betting and betting until there were more than ten dollars of Joe's chips in the pot. But I needed fifteen for what I had in my mind for to-day, and I just raised him plump five dollars. It makes me tremble to think how utterly awful I was!

"'This lesson will be a dear one, Mame,' said Joe.

"He meant it would be a dear one for me, I suppose, because he positively raised me five dollars. I was in for it now, Jen, and I just gritted my teeth and raised Joe back. Then he looked at me and seemed puzzled.

"'Blessed if I don't believe you've got 'em, sure enough, Mame,' said he. 'New beginners beat all for luck in drawing hands. It isn't good poker to play against blind luck. I lay down. The pot is yours. Here's the hand you were betting against—an ace high flush. A hard one to beat. What did you have, anyway?'

"'You horrid thing!' I exclaimed. 'To go and quit so I wouldn't win more of your money! You shan't see my hand, just for that!'

"And I mixed it all up with the other cards. I made believe I was awfully put out with Joe, and wouldn't take another poker lesson that night. Just think, Jen! Fifteen dollars! A dear lesson for Joe, wasn't it?"

"Simply awful!" and the two innocents again laughed merrily. "And what did you hold in your hand, Mamie?"

"Just two horrid little two spots," said Mamie, and the raid on the bargain counters began afresh.

That night, of course, Joe's sister must tell him, in all innocence, how Mamie had bluffed him to a standstill, and Joe pondered. As she was telling the story she spied a card under the sofa and picked it up.

"Why," she exclaimed, "this is the eight spot I dropped the other night, Joe, and found the king picture card to takes its place!"

Then Joe pondered more. There were possibilities in poker greater than he had calculated on, and he gave no more lessons in the home circle nor to his sweetheart.

"A fellow can't play the game with women for what it's worth," he said.

A little later on Joe met with another disappointment. He had taught old Colonel Brown and Judge Havens to play poker. Their aptness and enthusiasm in the game delighted him. One day the colonel met him, and said:

"The judge and I had a great game yesterday. The hands we held on one deal everybody said were wonderful. We'd have been betting yet if the chips hadn't run out. Everybody stayed in and bet around a couple of times until the judge raised me ten. All the rest dropped out. I raised the judge back ten, and we kept whooping it up, ten a whack, until we had raised each other twenty times, and at last I had to call him because I had got to the size of my pile.

"'What did you get, judge?' said I.

"'All red,' said he.

"'I'm all black,' said I.

"'No!' said the judge. 'But my red has an ace on top.'

"'So has my black!' said I.

"'King next!' said he.

"'King next here!' said I.

"'Queen!' said he.

"'Queen!' said I.

"'Thunder!' said the judge. 'Jack and ten here!'

"'Jack and ten here!' said I.

"'Well, I'll be d——d!' said the judge, throwing his hand on the table.

"'So will I,' said I, throwing my hand at the side of his. And all we could do was to divide the pot. What do you think of that, Joseph?"

"Beats anything on record!' exclaimed Joe. "Two royal flushes! Never was heard of before! Might as well been eights up, though. What was there to divide?"

"After we drew out our bets," said the colonel, "there was—let's see—one, six, ten—sixteen. Yes, sixteen. Sixteen cents to divide. Oh, I forgot to tell you we were playing penny ante, ten cents limit."

"Penny ante!" exclaimed Joe. "To think that I have taught poker to two infernal idiots who can sit still and bet ten cents on a royal flush! It disgusts me with the game!"

He was so much disgusted that he didn't sit in with the boys for nearly a week. Then he dropped around again for a little game. Everything seemed to be going the pleasantest kind, until Joe noticed that some one was absent. Jack Edwards had become acquainted with a plausible and companionable young fellow, named Burton, a month or so before. He liked him, and by and by brought him around and introduced him to the rest of the boys. During the fortnight they knew him, he had taken only an occasional hand, but played well, and generally had good luck. Everybody liked him, so Joe, not seeing him there that night, naturally turned to Edwards and said:

"By the way, Jack, where's your friend Burton to-night?"

"I wish I knew!" cried Jack. "I'd go a hundred miles just to get one good crack at him!"

Then Joe learned that only two nights before Burton had taken a hand with the boys, and on sitting down, said he'd have to quit at 10 o'clock because he had some

business in Philadelphia, and had to get the 10.50 train. Luck ran his way pretty well, and at 10 o'clock he handed over his chips to be cashed in. Jack Edwards was banker.

"Holy smoke, old man!" exclaimed Jack, as he saw the stack. "You sat square down in a butter tub this night, sure enough!"

He threw out the hundred and fifty the chips called for, and Burton bade the boys good-night and hurried out. Two hours later, when the game was done for the night, in cashing the chips that were out, Edwards found the bank a hundred and twenty-five dollars short, and investigation discovered that the chips that called for that money were just that many more than belonged on the table. The slick and plausible Burton had run in on Jack chips of his own for a hundred and twenty-five, and Jack had to make it good.

Joe Binns slammed his cards on the table when he thus heard why Burton wasn't there, kicked over his chair, and banged himself out of the room. Next day he went up to his favorite retreat in the country for a two weeks' fish. He found the usual crowd of good fellows there, and he soon forgot his disappointments that had followed one so quick upon the other in his favorite game; so far, in fact, that when Professor Jaffer, who was stopping at the hotel, on being asked by him one day if he didn't want to join in a social game that evening, told him that he would be delighted, but he did not know the game, Joe exclaimed:

"What! Then I'll teach it to you!"

The professor, who was a retiring, middle-aged man, at first protested that he was afraid he couldn't learn, but finally consented to try. Joe took him in charge, and in a day or two the professor said he believed he understood the game well enough to take a few chances on it, and he did. His methods were amateurish, and he lost more than he won at every sitting, but he seemed fascinated with the game, and said the pleasure was worth more than it cost. Joe was proud of his new pupil.

One night Joe and the professor and two or three more were playing, and the game got to running pretty stiff. The professor had been lucky enough to stand about even, when they all agreed to play one jack-pot and quit. A five-dollar jack-pot. The ante went around five times, and no one opened. It was Joe's deal. The professor sat on his left. Joe shuffled the cards and pushed them to the professor to cut. The professor took the deck, shuffled it once or twice in an amateurish, bungling way.

"Just for luck," said he, pushing them back to Joe.

The cards were dealt, and the first player from Joe opened the pot for ten. They all came in up to the professor. He seemed undecided for a moment, and then made it twenty to play. Every man came in.

"Whew!" said Joe. "Somebody must expect to get a hand this trip!"

Some drew three cards and some two. The professor took one. So did Joe.

"Bet ten," said the man who opened the pot.

Every bet was raised ten until it came to the professor, and he again, after a moment's hesitating uncertainty, raised it twenty. Joe raised the professor twenty. The next man went ten better, and again the bets were raised all the way to the professor, whose excitement was plain to everybody, but he lifted the bet another twenty. Joe stayed by him and sent it up twenty higher.

"I hate to lay this hand down," said the next man, "but this is a little too hot for me.'

Two others quit, with similar remarks about their hands. The professor, Joe, and one other player were the only ones left in the game. The latter stood Joe's raise, and went as much more on his hand. The professor was trembling, but he made the last bet good and raised fifty. Joe came in, happy as could be, and topped the professor fifty. The third player looked longingly at his hand, and laid it down.

"It's the winner though, sure!" said he.

Then the professor and Joe had it hammer and tongs until the pot was big enough to buy a gilt-edged farm. At last Joe said:

"It may be, professor, that you've had the bullhead luck that all greenhorns have, but I don't believe you can beat this hand. Just the same, I've backed it all it's worth, and call you."

The professor showed an ace full.

"It's good!" said Joe. "Mine's a king full."

"I held a full hand, too!" cried the next man to Joe, and every man around the board shouted the same.

"Six full hands on one deal!" exclaimed Joe, and looked scared.

"Is that remarkable?" asked the professor, as he raked in the rich pot, which he did with a coolness that Joe thought extraordinary in a man who had been so excited and nervous only a moment before.

"Remarkable!" exclaimed Joe. "Such a deal was never made before on earth."

"And just to think!" said the professor. "You dealt 'em!"

Next day the bill-posting outfit of a circus came to town, and Joe saw the bill man talking and laughing with the professor, as the former was dobbing his posters on the side of the hotel barn. When the professor went away Joe walked out and talked with the bill poster.

"Do you know that man you were speaking to just now?"

"Know him!" replied the circus man. "Should say so. I didn't expect to see him here, though."

"Who is he?" asked Joe.

"Who is he?" said the bill poster. "Why, he's Red Shirt Kelley, the king of three card monte men and all-around card sharps! He's been waiting here for our show, but tells me he's changed his mind, and will catch on up in York State."

Joe walked away without another word. This was the last straw.

And that's why Joe Binns swore off playing poker, if any one wants to know.

Another gripping story, called "Baffled by Fate," begins in our next number.

AERIAL MAILS FOR DENMARK

QUITE a deal of useful work is being done by the Danish Aeronautical Society in preparing for aerial mail services which it is hoped to start when the war is over. Negotiations are pending with 39 municipalities, according to *Flight*, in the matter of constructing landing stations, including hangars 1,300 feet square. Routes from Copenhagen to Odense, Frederica and Esbjerg, from Copenhagen to Kallundborg and Aarhus and from Copenhagen to Aalorg have been mapped out; a route from the Danish capital to Gothenburg and Christiania is planned

THE RENEGADE DETECTIVE

A Serial Story

By RANDOLPH BADGER

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCLUSION

THE night closed in dark and gloomy, and at precisely nine o'clock a coach came flying down the road and stopped before the Red Shield.

The coachman jumped down from his box, all enveloped in oil-skins, and going to the door, he opened it and said:

"Have you got the note, Joslin?"

"Yes; here it is, Barton. You will find the women in the parlor."

"Shall I tell them that you are in the coach?"

"By no means; that would spoil all."

"Why, are you going to chloroform them?"

"Of course. They cannot make any noise then."

"All right," said the other, and he entered the tavern.

A few minutes later two female figures emerged, followed by the driver.

"Step right in, ladies," said Barton; "step right in out of the rain."

"Is the coach empty?" asked one timidly, in a low tone.

"Certainly, ma'am."

"All right."

The next moment they were in; Joslin had caught them by their arms, and while he held them Barton slammed the door, mounted to his box, and lashed his horses, which, with flying manes and tails, reared up their graceful necks and dashed away.

"Oh!" exclaimed one of Joslin's prisoners, "a man!"

"Mercy!" cried the other.

Joslin was chuckling with delight at his success.

"So, my dear friends," he cried in jubilant tones, "I've got you fast. You didn't expect to find an escort on your little trip, did you?"

"It is Mr. Joslin," whispered one.

"Correct!" he laughed. "And now, just listen—if you cry out or make the least noise that may betray me, I may be obliged to resort to very disagreable measures to silence you."

The two females burst out laughing, and Joslin started.

Suddenly a lantern was unmasked, illuminating the interior of the coach.

"Blood and death, it is Jim Thorn!" yelled Joslin frantically.

"And Simon Jigger, my beauty," laughed the other.

Before the rascal recovered from the shock of this discovery, he found a pair of handcuffs upon his wrists.

"So," said Thorn, with a grim laugh, "you thought you had me!"

His only answer was a dismal groan.

"You see, though," continued the renegade detective, "that you did not drown me, after all. A river police boat picked me up."

"Barton is a traitor!" muttered Joslin hollowly.

"You are right. He is in my employ."

"Ah!" said the shivering rascal, with a start. "Gone back on me, has he?"

"Ay! He is a reformed man. He has confessed all of your duplicity to me, and on his evidence Ralph Desmond will be a vindicated man."

"Curse him!" howled the other in savage tones.

"Rave, that's it; I like to hear it," laughed the detective. "You gave me trouble enough, and it is some satisfaction to down you."

"And I," said Jigger, "have in my pocket the affidavit of Mrs. Desmond that it was you who murdered Arthur Desmond in order to rob him."

"Fury!" yelled the other, starting again, and turning livid in the face.

"Besides that," said Jigger, "we've got a little surprise in store for you."

At this moment the coach stopped, and Barton alighted.

"Ah!" said Thorn, "we are at the house at last."

"The house?" echoed Joslin vaguely.

"Yes," said Jigger. "Dan Fulton's residence."

"I shan't go in there!" he cried in alarm.

"Oh, won't you?" said Thorn. "We'll see!"

They alighted, and dragged him out with them, despite his resistance.

"Let me go!" he cried in furious accents.

"I guess not," replied Thorn grimly.

"Hello, there, is that you, Mr. Joslin?" said a strange voice.

It proceeded from a dense clump of bushes near by.

The two detectives drew their pistols and gazed sharply about.

"Ay!" cried the prisoner eagerly. "Help! Help, Gaffer! These two detectives have got me."

Jigger suddenly interrupted him by clasping his hand over his mouth.

"Them again, eh?" growled the voice of Grimes. "Come on, Tom and Jerry. We've got a chance to git square with 'em now."

"Stand back or we'll blow out your brains!" cried Thorn.

"Shoot and be hanged to you!" was the defiant response.

They did not show themselves, but after Gaffer had spoken he discharged his pistol, and Thorn fell over with a bullet in him.

Jigger lifted his struggling prisoner in his arms and ran for the house.

Bang! went a pistol again, and Simon toppled over with his prisoner.

At the same moment the door of the house was thrown open, and Slinking Sammy rushed out.

"Murder! murder!" he shrieked.

"This way, Gaffer!" shouted Joslin.

"Ay! We are coming."

"Thorn! Thorn!" cried Simon. "Thorn, where are you?"

"I'm shot," came the faint response.

"Oh, Simon!" cried Sammy, running down to his friend.

At the same moment Joslin arose to his feet and ran like a deer toward the three shadowy forms of Grimes and his two sons.

"Ah! We just arruv in time!" cried Gaffer.

"You did, indeed," replied Joslin. "Let us fly. The game is lost."

"Come on with us, then. We've broken jail and are escapin'."

There was a crushing of the bushes just as the two detectives regained their feet, and they sped away through the darkness up the road.

Sammy saw them going, and, leaving Simon's side, he ran toward Brierly stables.

"Thorn!" called Simon.

"Here!" came a firmer response.

"Are you badly hurt?"

"I've got a bullet in my body. And you?"

"They struck me in the shoulder."

"Come over here."

Jigger soon found him. He was standing beside the coach.

"Sammy was here a moment ago," said Simon.

"Where has he gone?"

"I don't know. Will you follow them?"

"We may miss them in the darkness, confound it!"

"Well, it's worth trying. Come on."

"Hark! What's that?"

"The baying of a hound. Ah! Sammy has it."

"Here he is," said the boy, running up from the stables behind the huge liver-colored beast. "He belonged to Arthur Desmond. Put him on their scent."

"This is lucky," said Thorn. "Here is his coat. We can follow the hound on the backs of this team. Barton, take off the harness and leave only the headgear on. We will soon overhaul them now, as they are on foot."

The horses were made ready, the hound put on the scent, with a long rope fastened to his collar, the other end of which was in Thorn's hand.

Then they started, leaving Barton behind in the carriage, Sammy jogging after them on foot. On they dashed out of the grounds and up the road, making the dust fly under their horses' hoofs, the hound baying ever and anon as it rushed along with its keen-scented muzzle pressed close to the ground, never losing their track for an instant.

They had gone along this way quarter of an hour, when suddenly the hound turned from the road and ran into a rocky defile, the bottom of which was so rough and uneven that their horses kept stumbling, threatening momentarily to pitch them from their backs.

Lightning was zigzagging across the stormy sky, and thunder reverberated among the surrounding crags with deafening crashes. They had gone up the gorge a dozen yards when an unusually bright flash lit up the scene, making their horses shy. At the same moment they saw their four enemies, up on either side of the gorge, in the act of hurling several huge boulders down upon their heads.

Thorn aimed at Gaffer and fired.

They heard a wild cry, and started their horses ahead just as the boulders came crashing down into the ravine. Had those cyclopean blocks of stone struck them, neither horses nor riders would have lived to breathe another breath. Again the lightning flashed, and both detectives fired. A roar of thunder followed, and they could not tell whether they had hit their man or not. The lightning's flash showed them an opening in the side of the ravine through which those upon the rocks had made their way, and loosening the bloodhound, it sprang ahead with a savage growl, and soon disappeared from their view up the ravine.

Dismounting from their horses, they followed after the beast; and upon reaching the summit of the rocks, they heard the tones of a man shouting in frenzied accents for help, these cries being interspersed with the growls and gnashing of the hound's teeth.

"It is the voice of Joslin," said Simon.

"Ay!" replied Thorn. "And see! The hound has him fast!"

By the next flash they saw the man and the beast rolling over on the ground in a fearful struggle, Joslin almost helpless from having his wrists confined in the handcuffs. Near by stood Jerry Grimes, and he was striving to stab the hound without injuring his friend. On the top of the rocks on the other side laid Gaffer and his son Tom, both evidently wounded, and cursing like maniacs. Jerry finally killed the hound, and seeing the two detectives, he fired the two remaining shots in his revolver at them, and turning tail, he fled, leaving Joslin to shift for himself. The bullets were not wasted, for one of them laid Thorn out on the green sward insensible. Seeing this, Joslin seemed to think he would get away, after all, and turned to run, when, with an imprecation, Jigger pounced down upon him, and knocking him down, he secured his ankles so he could not move. Then going back to Thorn, he found that Sammy had arrived, and was bending over him stanching a flow of blood from his bosom.

"Hello!" he exclaimed. "How did you get here, Sammy?"

"Follered yer."

"I'm glad you've come. Mount one of the horses and ride back to the house with them both and fetch Barton here with the carriage."

"All right," said the boy, and he sped away.

He was not gone long, and when he returned Thorn had recovered consciousness. The detective had a severe flesh wound, which had bled freely, and weakened him. The three prisoners were confined in the coach, Jigger staying inside with them to guard, and Sammy, Thorn and Burger sat outside.

They then drove back to Dan Fulton's house, and, after locking Gaffer and his son Tom in the cellar, they took Joslin out of the coach, which Barton drove back to Brierly, and, preceded by Sammy, the two detectives went up on the veranda, rang the bell, and a servant admitting them, they marched their prisoner into the parlor, where a startling surprise awaited him.

The parlors of old Captain Dan Fulton's house were magnificent in every appointment, and an air of luxury pervaded the place when Thorn and Jigger entered, with Joslin behind them, followed by Sammy.

A huge chandelier, depending from the center of the ceiling, disseminated a bright glow throughout the apartment, making the crimson satin furniture, carpet and hangings resplendent with warm color.

There was an old man with white hair sitting beside the table in the center of the room conversing with a younger gentleman, and when the strange quartet entered they looked up inquiringly.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Joslin, reeling back, "Dan Fulton and Ralph Desmond!"

"Ay!" cried the old sailor, rising to his feet with a dark frown upon his brow. "It is I. And can this inhuman rascal, who sought to take my life be my own son—the boy I cherished, idolized, worshiped? Speak!"

Joslin glanced at the two silent detectives.

"Evidently," he thought, "he is not yet informed of the duplicity."

"You say nothing," continued Mr. Fulton. "I read your shame and disgrace in your countenance. You are no son of mine! You are an adventurer. You tried to kill me in order to possess yourself of my money; but, thank God! you failed, owing to the acuteness of this man," pointing at Jigger. "And not only did you strive to have my life," he continued vehemently, "but you strove with devilish malignity to fasten the guilt upon this innocent young man."

Jigger made a motion to Sammy, who left the room.

"The time for retributive justice has come," said the indignant old captain; "and now that I see you in the hands of the law, you may rest assured that I not only will not lift a finger to save you, but I will do all in my power to have you severely punished."

At this moment Sammy came in, followed by Camille and Chiquita.

Ralph arose to his feet overcome with emotion.

"Camille!" he cried in happy tones, as he held open his arms.

"Ralph!" she shrieked as she rushed toward him. "My husband!"

Then she paused and looked fearfully at the two detectives.

"He is innocent, and I have proof that it was Delano Joslin who was the real culprit. May God forgive my former error!" exclaimed Thorn.

They both uttered glad cries and flew to each other's arms—reunited.

"And he," said Chiquita, pointing at the trembling Joslin, while she drew Sammy close to her, "is the murderer of Arthur Desmond!"

"What!" cried Fulton in surprise.

"Even though he is my husband, he is infamous, he is guilty!" she cried.

"My worst curse upon you!" he cried bitterly.

"It can do me no harm," was her dauntless answer.

"Camille!" cried Thorn emotionally. "Can you forgive me?"

"Oh!" she cried, running into the old detective's arms. "My father!"

"Her father!" they all cried, aghast.

"Yes! I am her father," he said sternly.

He looked around at their surprised faces and went on harshly:

"An unnatural father, you will all say; but it was my nature. My duty before all else. I sacrificed every tender emotion to do it. But at last I am overcome. When she married Ralph Desmond, just before I arrested him, I cast her off in my rage; to think that my daughter would marry a man whom I saw was fast going to the dogs under the pernicious tutelage of this arch-rascal, Delano Joslin. Never did I see her again after that until I heard that Arthur Desmond had bribed the keepers to release his son from prison, and I came here to arrest him again. But compassion was in my heart, and to warn poor Desmond that I was coming, so he could send his son away in time, I wrote him a letter. I had to do my duty, even though I tried to circumvent myself. What was my horror upon arriving to find that Arthur Desmond was killed. And worse than all, every point tended to make me think my own daughter was his murderess! What could I do—hang my own child? No! I did what I never dreamed I would do—I renegaded myself in order to protect her, to save her from Simon Jigger, who tried to convict her."

"Ah, Thorn," interposed Jigger, "do you not remember that I told you I only persecuted Mrs. Desmond to make a test trial of a plan I had formed? Let me explain, as the time for explanation seems to be at hand. Joslin was my enemy and had become invested with frightful power, as he was a magistrate. I too was convinced that he was Desmond's murderer, and just imagine the malignity of the wretch: he knew he was guilty, and in order to save himself he tried to convict your daughter. He, the murderer, was the judge; the woman who could convict him, if she dared speak, was his prisoner, charged with the crime. My object in bringing them face to face in that strange position, for they perfectly understood each other, I could see, was to discover if he really was the culprit. I was watching him closely, while apparently eager to convict Mrs. Desmond. I saw nothing; he had the most perfect control over himself, and did not commit himself by word, look or deed. Unfortunately, Thorn, you came in at the wrong moment and spoiled my little game. I did not know what incentive prompted her to protect Joslin, but now it is plain to be understood that as he had her husband (an escaped convict) in his power, he easily held domain over her by threatening to deliver Ralph Desmond up to the authorities if she gave him away to the police as the murderer and robber of Arthur Desmond."

"Ladies and gentlemen," interposed Joslin, casting about him a defiant glance, and a contemptuous smile hovered about his face, "you can come to no particular conclusion by mere surmises, as I will presently show you. Of Desmond I will speak later, without making a mountain out of a mole-hill. Let me call your attention to the facts of my culpability. I confess to my guilt of having robbed Arthur Desmond; I confess to having robbed him on the night he was found dead, but I deny having killed him, and I defy any one to prove my criminality. I confess to having falsely represented myself as the son of Dan Fulton; I confess to having striven to kill him; I confess to having done all I could to injure James Thorn, Mr. and Mrs. Desmond; I confess to having been the real culprit in the forgery case for which Ralph Desmond suffered, for I see Nick Barton has gone back on me, and I confess to having been the man who was the cause of the ruination of both Ralph Desmond and Harry Fulton——"

"What!" cried the old captain, in horror. "My son?"

"Your son," replied Joslin quietly.

"Villain!" shouted the old man, springing toward him furiously. "Where is he; where have you put my boy; what have you done to him?"

Thorn and Jigger intervened themselves between the infuriated father and Joslin, who did not betray any trepidation, and Camille quieted him presently.

"I will answer that last question," said Jigger, when the old captain was calm.

"You?" murmured Thorn, in surprise.

"Yes. This Delano Joslin stabbed him and threw him into the river."

"Oh, my God!" groaned old Dan, bursting out into a cold sweat.

"You lie!" cried Joslin ferociously, as he glared balefully at his accuser.

"I can prove my assertion."

"You can't! I admitted all of my criminality. Arrest me now; do your worst. I defy you to prove anything worse against me than what I confessed. I know what I did. I am a criminal; I am not a murderer, and you cannot fasten any guilt upon me, I say!"

"Do you deny stabbing Harry Fulton?" cried Jigger.

"Don't try to fasten a crime upon me I never committed."

"Such is not my intention."

"Then why do you accuse me?"

"Because I can prove what I allege."

"As I said before, I defy you!"

"Very good. Look at me attentively, Delano Joslin."

He pulled off his wig and false mustache.

Joslin gave one look, and a deathly pallor overspread his face.

"I am lost!" he murmured.

"And you, Dan Fulton," said Jigger. "Do you not recognize me?"

"My son! My son!" cried the old sailor, clasping him in his arms rapturously.

"Ay, I am your own true boy," said the pseudo Jigger.

"How could I be mistaken?" cried the old man, releasing him. "No! I know you now, my dear boy. And this rascal! His similarity, his oily tongue that told me the glib lies—ah! that disguise was nearly perfect. I was deceived."

"He escaped me!" muttered Joslin, trembling in every limb.

"I know," said Harry Fulton. "He played his part well; but he failed! I played my double rôle; I succeeded, let me tell you! He did stab me. Then he threw me from the row-boat into the river that night. I had lost consciousness, and floated off with the tide. My clothing, something I know not what it was, sustained me. At any rate, I was picked up by a freight schooner bound for Boston, and, under the care of the kind Captain Spanker, whom I impersonated, I recovered. When I arrived in Boston, and had told him who I was, I was set ashore and gained a situation, at which I remained until I had amassed a little money. I fell in with Sammy, who was then a homeless vagrant earning his living as a roadside acrobat. Together we started to tramp to New York. I had suspected the design of this rascal, and disguised myself to escape recognition. Arrived at a certain point, we encountered two men who put in our care Ralph Desmond, and paid us to take him with us, without telling us he was an escaped convict. After many vicissitudes we finally arrived here, with instructions what to do with Ralph. Soon I discovered the trick that Joslin had played me, and, after I had discharged my duty with Ralph Desmond, I resolved to wait and watch Joslin in disguise, in order to see what was his intent. I might have disclosed his perfidy long ago, but I was restrained by my desire to fathom his plans. In the disguise of a detective I must have occasioned James Thorn unutterable misery, for I did not know that this lady was his own daughter. While Mr. Thorn was seeking to protect his daughter, I was harassing her, and thus a slight enmity sprang up between us, which was finally dissipated when he began to see through my design."

"Well," said Joslin, "as I did not happen to end your existence, you have only one more charge to make against me—assault with intent to kill."

"Ah," said Thorn, "how persistently you strive to escape the gallows!"

"So I shall!" he replied with a laugh.

"It is a matter of doubt. I heard you hint of the crime to Rackstraw."

At this moment Barton rushed into the room.

"The prisoners have escaped!" he exclaimed.

"What! Grimes and his son gone?" asked Thorn.

"They are not in the cellar."

"Well, let them go," said Thorn. "It is a pity they have cheated the State prison, but they will end up sooner or later. Still, I cannot understand how they got away without assistance."

"The ropes were cut," said Barton, "and the cellar door was open."

"That is sufficient; they had outside help. And now, Delano Joslin, you come with me to the city, and when I find Bancroft we will soon have a case against you, or I am much mistaken."

"And when you want us," said Harry Fulton, "you will know where to find us to appear against him."

The detective nodded, and, taking his prisoner by the arm, said:

"Good-night. I will soon see you all again. Come, Barton."

And, followed by the ex-pickpocket, he led his prisoner from the room.

Reaching the city, he incarcerated Joslin, and the next day, upon searching for the constable, he found him lying in an hospital half-dead from his fearful fall from the elevated road.

The poor wretch did not have many days more to live, and, being cognizant of the fact, he was in a penitent mood, and wished to do all in his power to ease his troubled mind.

He readily made a deposition, swearing that Joslin had confessed to him that he had gone into Arthur Desmond's room with the intention of robbing him of one hundred thousand dollars contained in the safe. He overheard Desmond tell Camille that the money was there when in the garden, and while the young woman was engaged in conversation he had picked her pocket, and thus gained possession of the safe key with which he opened the safe.

While ransacking the safe Desmond was awakened, and fearful lest he would lose the money, after all, Joslin sprang upon the old man, and in the struggles which ensued he strangled his victim to death.

Armed with this formidable document, the detective appeared in court against his prey, and, adding to it the long array of evidence of his other crimes, he was sentenced to be hung.

Chiquita never went near him, as he had treated her very cruelly, and when he finally expiated his crime on the gallows, it was with a sense of relief that she clasped Sammy in her arms, and, while the tears coursed down her cheeks, she murmured:

"At last, my son, we are freed from his hateful persecutions! May God protect you and keep you from the evil example of your father."

John Bancroft, alias Rackstraw, died in the hospital, and Gaffer, Jerry and Tom Grimes in time were apprehended by James Thorn, and spent the rest of their lives in prison.

Camille and her husband Ralph would not part with Chiquita and her son, so they took up their residence at Brierly, and in the course of time Harry Fulton, with the full approbation of his father, old Captain Dan, married Chiquita, and resigned his commission in the detective firm of Ketchum & Co.

Mary Jones and Patrick Brady, the two witnesses against Camille, finally imitated the example of their superiors and were united.

Alexander Splofford, the attorney, disappeared, and was never seen again until he was arrested with Gaffer, Tom and Jerry Grimes, whom, it appeared, he and Jerry had liberated from the cellar where they were confined.

As for James Thorn, the renegade detective, the bitterness of his last exploit so wounded him that he resigned his commission and lived a quiet life with Camille and her husband until he finally died.

THE END.

Another rousing detective serial begins in No. 19. Don't miss it. The title is "The Fatal Prints," by William S. Hall. Every line of this powerfully dramatic story will hold your interest.

CURRENT NEWS

STOLE EIGHTY PAIRS OF SILK HOSE.

Thomas Loyd and Glenn L. Brasel pleaded guilty before Judge Latshaw, Kansas City, Mo., to stealing eighty pairs of silk hose and a quantity of silk underwear from a Missouri Pacific car. They were sentenced to four years in the penitentiary.

FINDS GROUND GLASS IN HER POWDER PUFF

A young Albany, N. Y., woman employed in a local department store, looked in a mirror and saw her nose was lamentably in lack of powder. She picked up her powder puff, but her nose went shiny for the remainder of the day. Ground glass was sprinkled in it, she found.

GROCERS FIX THEIR OWN PUNISHMENT

Two grocers at Perryopolis, Pa., who had been violating the Administration flour order, set their own punishment at a hearing. They said they would refrain from selling flour for thirty days, would buy $100 worth of Liberty Bonds and donate $100 each to the Red Cross. Ignorance of the law was given as an alibi.

PRO-GERMAN HID AWAY 500 POUNDS OF FLOUR

After F. H. Mayland, alleged pro-German clothier, Muskogee, Okla., had been attacked by a mob of 300 men, United States officers, in a search of his clothing store, found 500 pounds of flour hidden in suit-boxes and other receptacles in the building. Mayland and a clerk, Fritz Cracauer, also a German, are held in the Federal jail.

ASH TREES FOR AIRPLANES

The appeal of the Aerial League of the British Empire to landowners to offer their ash trees for aeronautical purposes has resulted in between three and four thousand trees being offered within the last month, according to *Flight*. The government requirements in the next twelve months are expected to exceed 200,000 trees.

$875 FOR A COONSKIN.

A coonskin trapped in southeast Missouri recently sold for $875 at a London fur auction. N. Goldsmith, head of a local fur company, sent a shipment of skins to London and included a particularly pretty coonskin. He requested that it be sold to the highest bidder and the proceeds donated to some war charity. He was informed by cable that the pelt brought 180 pounds, the money being given to the Prisoners of War Fund.

RESIGNS AFTER PUPILS SPOIL KAISER'S PICTURE

Residents of Hope, Me., are stirred over the resignation of Miss Josephine Knight as teacher of the Hope Corner School, after the pupils had gouged out the eyes of the kaiser from a picture, the personal property of Miss Knight. According to her version, she was showing pictures of the European rulers, and the children took offense at that of the German ruler. Mrs. Emma J. Kimball, supervisor of the school, could find no evidence that Miss Knight was a German sympathizer.

AUTOIST NARROWLY ESCAPES LANDSLIDE

Throwing his clutch into "high" speed brought the auto of Andrew Olessak of Western avenue, Westfield, Mass.,to safety in crossing a section on the old Dry Bridge road on Russell Mountain, just as a section of the road twenty-five feet long slid into the Little River, 600 feet below.

Olessak felt the road slipping and acted immediately. The machine jumped ahead and cleared the section before the road slid over a cliff and thence into the river. It had been in poor shape some time, due to heavy traffic.

OLD FADED PAINTINGS RESTORED BY X-RAY.

Interesting experiments have been conducted at Munich and Vienna in the examination of old portraits with Roentgen rays.

One of the curators of the art museum used the X-rays on an old Madonna portrait and discovered evidence of a later overpainting. In Vienna Prof. Marx Dvorak applied the same test to a picture of the Mantegna School, which had been badly disfigured by later attempts at reconstruction. The X-ray photograph disclosed perfectly the original contour of the painting.

BURNED BY A GASOLINE STOVE

Lowell McKee, aged two years, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Will McKee, living south of Rushville, Ind., was burned to death when a gasoline stove in the kitchen of the family home exploded.

Mrs. McKee, who was out of the house when the explosion occurred, rushed back and saved two of her children, but could not find Lowell. He was back of the stove when it exploded and ran to the pantry, his clothes ablaze.

The child lived only a few minutes after he was found. The fire was put out before the house was destroyed.

SCHOOLGIRLS SAVE BOYS

Grace Hadley and Mary Pendergast, schoolgirls of Peekskill, N. Y., were acclaimed heroines recently as a result of saving two little boys from drowning in Roe's pond. The boys disappeared below the surface once before they were rescued.

Joseph Pendergast, seven, slipped off a plank and fell into the water. He grabbed Wilbert De Revere and was dragging him down. The two girls, one the sister of Joseph Pendergast, dived into the pond, and, getting the boys in tow, brought them safely back to shore.

COUPLE FORFEIT LIFE SAVINGS TO GOVERNMENT

The savings of a lifetime of a sailor and his wife have been seized by Federal officials because the couple did not know of President Wilson's order forbidding the taking of gold out of the country.

Because Mrs. Ricardo Rodriguez, San Francisco, feared banks, she persuaded her husband to carry their entire fortune, $1,855, with him on a trip to Central America. The officers found it and took possession. Because of the nature of the case, permission is to be asked of Secretary McAdoo to return the money.

PLANT TO BUILD CONCRETE SHIPS

A plant for the construction of concrete ships is to be erected in Cleveland by the Cleveland Builders' Supply Company, according to the *Nautical Gazette*. Construction will be limited to concrete ships, barges and boats. It will be the first plant of its kind on the Great Lakes. The vessels are to be for lake and canal trade and are designed to release ships now in lake trade for sea service. The first vessels will be begun within 60 to 90 days after construction on the plant is started, and it is hoped to complete a set of four vessels every 30 days when operations are well under way.

SHOT FREES TRAPPED ELK

In Logan Canyon, Utah, recently Ted Seeholzer, Deputy Game Warden, came upon a peculiar situation and met it in an unusual way.

The Deputy found a big male elk apparently entrapped by one horn. The horn was entangled with a web of chicken wire three feet wide and about twenty feet long. The animal was struggling to get the wire from its horn.

Seeholzer, realizing that elk are protected throughout the year and that a miss shot might bring him into a position that would be hard to explain to R. H. Siddoway, Commissioner, took careful aim and when there was a lull in the struggle shot the outer extremity of the horn off.

CARROTS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR EGGS

"In these days of high prices," says Popular Science, "anything that can be used as a substitute, and give good results at the same time, will be a welcome addition in helping to keep down the high cost of living. Broiled carrots, when properly treated, form an excellent substitute for eggs in puddings, etc. Boil the carrots until they are tender and nearly ready to fall apart; drain carefully and mash and press through a coarse cloth or strainer. The pulp is then introduced among the other ingredients of the pudding and the eggs totally omitted. Puddings made in this manner are lighter than where eggs are used, and are more palatable. The carrots also impart a fine yellow color to the pudding so that nobody can tell whether eggs were used or not."

ILLUMINATING MUNITION PLANTS

Nearly all attempts to commit injury or to do damage in the munition plants or factories where war work is under way for the Government is done at night and the most effective means of thwarting these efforts is to illuminate the factories so effectually that no spy can hope to get into them or to commit harm in them without being seen. Accordingly the Militia Bureau, which has much of the responsibility for this guard duty, has called upon several organizations interested in lighting systems for information on the subject of the best way to illuminate factories from without and from within. They have contributed to a pamphlet which will soon be distributed to all factories engaged in work that subjects them to liability to harm from spies or German sympathizers.

HOW A BADGER WORKS

During the day time the badger sleeps deep in his burrow, far out on our Western plains and prairies, and at twilight he starts forth on a night's foraging. He is a dreaded enemy of the prairie dog and the ground squirrel; and when he begins to excavate for one, nothing but solid rock or death can stop him. With the long, blunt claws of his forefeet he loosens up the dirt. Dig! dig! dig! He works as though his life depended on it, now scratching out the sides of the hole, then turning on his back to dig overhead. At first he throws the dirt out between his hind legs, but soon he is too far down for that, so he banks it up back of him, then turns about, and using his chest and forward parts as a pusher, shoves it out before him. He works with such rapidity that it would be somewhat difficult for a man to overtake him with a spade.

ELECTRIC WELDING IN PLACE OF RIVETING

The proposal to use electric welding in place of rivets in securing the plating of a ship, is an attractive proposition if it can be done successfully, and we understand that tests which were recently made in the presence of the representatives of the Shipping Board have been so satisfactory that one of the engineers of the Emergency Fleet Corporation has been sent to Newark where the system is to be tried on a 9,500-ton ship which is about to be built by the Federal Shipbuilding Corporation of Newark, N. J. According to the dispatch, a low voltage is used and the current is applied to the metal through the ends of large forceps which press the sheets firmly together after the metal has become sufficiently heated to effect a weld.

SOLDIERS' WAISTCOATS FROM OLD KID GLOVES

Patriotic women in America may profit by the experience of their British cousins and follow their example by devoting their attention to the making of "glove waistcoats" instead of the sweaters which their nimble fingers have been knitting heretofore for the soldiers and sailors of our country, says *Popular Science Monthly*. These vests are made of waste material, discarded kid gloves, which cost practically nothing. The lining costs only thirty-five cents. One of these vests can easily be made in a day or two, while the knitting of a sweater takes considerable more time. Another advantage of the glove vests is that they weigh but a few ounces, are less bulky than woolen sweaters, yet fully as warm and more windproof. In addition to that they do not shelter vermin as do the knitted garments. It is to be hoped that American women will see the advantages in this new patriotic work.

BITTEN BY RAT, MAN ASKS AID FROM STATE.

Strange accidents have been reported to the State Industrial Commission, Madison, Wis., recently.

A man from Milwaukee asks compensation because of a rat bite. He was a garbage collector, emptying ash cans. In filing his report with the commissioner against the city of Milwaukee he claims a rat escaped from a garbage can and bit him. Blood poisoning resulted.

A lumber company of Rhinelander filed a report for an accident for "nerve injury." An employee worked at a circular saw which threw a stick of timber six feet long and several inches wide, striking the employee over the heart. The employee has refused to work, claiming that his nerves have been injured.

The report of the village of Prescott is for the death of the marshal. The marshal arrested an army deserter. The young man made his escape through a fusillade of bullets from irate citizens of the community. The marshal was killed, and the widow seeks compensation.

A garment worker at La Crosse was directed by a deputy of the Industrial Commission to guard a dangerous machine. He attempted to put the guards on himself. His hands were cut and blood poisoning set in. Now the employer threatens to sue the Industrial Commission for damages.

FOREFATHERS OF BUS

The "jitney" motor buses and cars which are now providing cheap transportation in many American cities are but a modern adaptation of an old idea. The genesis of the jitney may be traced to the cheap horse omnibuses of Paris and the hackney coaches of London. It was 279 years ago that Capt. Baily, a retired sea captain, first revolutionized London transportation methods by starting a line of cheap hackney coaches in that city.

In a letter written at that period it is stated that the innovator soon had many rivals, but all did a thriving business.

There were complaints, however, especialy among the watermen, who found their business almost ruined, and the shopkeepers also did not look upon the innovation with any great satisfaction. On the contrary, the following complaint is recorded: "When ladies and gentlemen walked in the streets there was a chance of obtaining customers, but now they whisk past in the coaches before our apprentices have time to cry out, "What d'ye lack?"

PLAN HOUSES TO BE SOLD BELOW COST

Plans for a city of model homes within walking distance of the Gloucester City yards of the Pusey & Jones Company, which may be purchased at cost by the employees of the company, are explained in the *Pusey & Jones Shipbuilder*. The unique feature of the plan is that the houses will be built without profit. The contractor will be paid wages to supervise the construction work. When completed the houses will be sold to the workmen at cost minus thirty per cent. Thus, if a house should cost $2,800 to build it will be sold for $1,960 on the condition that when the war is over, Government inspectors will look it over and if they find it has depreciated to the extent of thirty per cent of $2,800, the purchaser will be given the deed without further payment. If, however, they find that the house has depreciated only fifteen per cent, the purchaser will be given a deed upon paying the company fifteen per cent. The men in the plant will be represented by two men on the Board of Directors that is to control the properties. Designs of four, five, six and seven-room houses have been submitted.

WHY ISN'T IT HOTTER NEARER THE SUN THAN AWAY FROM IT?

Why is the air generally much colder a mile above the earth than near the ground? The heat of the atmosphere comes from the sun, but by a somewhat indirect process, explains *Popular Science Monthly*. The incoming sunbeams are only slightly absorbed by the dry air at high levels, and so have little effect on its temperature. Ir the lower regions of the atmosphere there is always a considerable amount of water vapor (water in the form of gas), and this substance has a relatively large capacity for absorbing heat from sunshine. Lastly, the earth absorbs all the heat that falls upon it and then gives it back by radiation or conduction to the air above it. Thus the atmosphere is mainly heated from below and not from above. Air heated near the ground tends to rise, but it cools rapidly in rising. As it reaches higher levels the pressure upon it is less; it expands, pushing away the surrounding air, and it uses up in this work some of the energy that it originally possessed in the form of heat. This process is referred to by scientists as "adiabatic cooling."

This explains why the heat of summer often seems to come up from the ground rather than from the broiling sun above.

SHOWERS OF FISH

The next time you read of a shower of fish or toads do not regard the story as entirely the product of sprightly imagination. Such things do happen from time to time. It is quite possible that a violent wind may scoop the water from a pond or stream and deposit it, together with its inhabitants, some distance away.

Showers of blood or sulphur or worms are often described as supernatural happenings in ancient writings, says W. L. McAttee in the *Monthly Weather Review*, but they are easily explained. Instances of "blood rains" have been shown to be due to the presence in pools of rain water of vast quantities of insect or animal life, the eggs or spores of which were probably transported by the wind. Reddish dust is also brought down during rainstorms.

Showers of "worms" may be caused by hordes of the larvae of insects, such as the soldier beetle, emerging from soil saturated by a heavy downpour. Quantities of pollen from trees and plants are often carried by the wind, which would explain the reported rains of sulphur.

Tornadoes have transported for considerable distances far heavier objects than those mentioned above. A turtle, six by eight inches, and entirely covered by ice, is said to have fallen during a hailstorm in Mississippi, while, in the same State, a 675-pound iron screw was lifted by a hurricane and deposited 900 feet away. A church spire was carried seventeen miles by a tornado at Mount Carmel, Ill.

SOME USES OF WOOD IN THE WAR

Millions of feet of lumber are used in the building of ships to carry our soldiers, supplies and ammunition. It is used for homes for the ship builders and houses for the soldiers in cantonments. Charcoal used in making gunpowder comes from wood. The charcoal for this purpose is made mainly from dogwood, willow and alder. Wood alcohol, used in large quantities for heating and in manufacturing ammunition, is made from wood. The stocks of guns are made from wood. Black walnut is the best wood for gun stocks, but birch is also used to some extent.

Bridges are built of wood to replace those destroyed by the enemy. Millions of railroad ties must be used in building railroads that carry supplies to the soldiers in the trenches. Huge quantities of lumber are required in constructing the trenches and dug-outs to protect the soldiers. Wood is used for fuel by the armies and here at home when coal cannot be had.

About two hundred feet of the choicest lumber is used in making an airplane, and nearly ten thousand feet of standing timber must be cut to obtain enough of this perfect wood for one airplane.

Boxes made of wood must be used for packing food and munitions.

Long poles called piles are driven into the earth under the water to make wharves for the ships that carry out soldiers.

Wood is used in making paper boxes for packing food, and also in making excelsior for packing other articles. The paper we use comes from wood. Trees are used by all armies wherever they exist to screen the soldiers and cannon from the enemy. Sugar and syrup are made from the sap of the maple tree.

Soft absorbent surgical cotton is made of wood cellulose. Slings are made from tough crêpe paper and the splints used to hold broken bones in place are also made from fibre boards.

THE WOMEN'S POLICE RESERVES.

A band of women comprised of actresses and others directly connected with the theater met at the Morosco Theater some weeks ago to listen to some pertinent remarks made by Captain Charles H. McKinney of the Twenty-sixth precinct and Inspector John F. Dwyer. They were uncertain as to the object of the meeting, but they all knew it was of patriotic nature, and, being patriotic and anxious to work for their country, they responded to the call.

On that day the first unit of the Women's Police Reserves was formed. The next meeting found them headed by Captain Edythe Totten, Hotel Astor, and actual work begun.

The women are to be drilled exactly as the Men's Police Reserve is drilled because obedience and order are necessary where any organization is concerned. They are to take charge of the work for which women are better adapted than men, and there is a great deal of that work at present, especially with girls. Above everything else, they are going to suppress German propaganda, for until that is suppressed we cannot hope to win the war, and win it we must, can and will.

A blue serge uniform with gold police buttons is worn, with leather puttees and belt and a blue trench cap. The outfit is very attractive and does not make any woman less feminine in appearance.

Brooklyn has responded to the call and has already formed several units; others are being formed daily in all of the Police Precincts. In a few weeks, instead of three thousand strong we shall be twenty thousand.

The work is voluntary, with no remuneration, but entertainments are to be given to raise necessary working funds.

We shall need assistance in these entertainments, and as Chairman of that committee, I shall gladly welcome any offers or suggestions. All communications should be addressed to Captain Edythe Totten, Hotel Astor.

The Women's Police Reserve is growing, every blue uniform represents that much damning propaganda destroyed, and we ask the co-operation of every loyal, patriotic man and woman.

Sincerely, BEULAH POYNTER,
First Lieutenant and Chairman of Amusement
Committee of the Women's Police Reserves.

ZEPPS BUILT TO SOAR 20,000 FEET

Not long since Zeppelins were brought to earth in France, and the last word in Zeppelin construction was disclosed to the French. These craft are 643 feet in length, 114 feet in height, consisting of eighteen different gas-containing compartments. These compartments hold about 1,000,000 cubic feet of hydrogen. This quality of gas will raise fifty-five tons weight from the earth.

The various parts and burdens of the structure are as follows: The metal frame, between ten and twelve tons; five motors, cars, balloon bags, crew, petrol, ballast and supplies and equipment of various kinds.

When the entire weight of all this has been deducted it is shown that one of these craft is capable of bearing to England's shores from two to three tons of explosives.

The chief factor in the new type of Zeppelin is ability to attain great heights. So skillful have the English become in the use of anti-aircraft guns that German engineers had to lay their plans for Zeppelins that could soar to 20,000 feet above the earth. This altitude is considered to provide a very fair margin of safety, too, against airplanes. As a matter of fact, the engineers' calculations went somewhat astray, for the tangible proof of the new machine is the group of broken Zepps that the French have brought down.

It is not very difficult for the new Zeppelins to ascertain their location at any time of the day or night, regardless of altitude. A wireless from the craft to the land stations in Germany will bring an answer. The direction whence the wireless waves come gives to the land station the aircraft's exact location, and the answer is made accordingly.

There is always the danger, however, of the wireless outfit getting out of order. That is exactly what happened to one of the craft that came down in France. Trusting to luck, the pilot descended, hoping to find himself in Holland. Instead the machine landed in the midst of a squadron of French airplanes.

NEWEST THINGS

The ear trumpet has been combined with spectacles by an inventor who has mounted a tube terminating in the ear on each side.

Some European electricians have found that snow never collects on transmission lines that carry 100,000 or more volts even when they are not charged.

A new gear pulley is provided with mechanism by which its jaws are automatically adjusted to various sizes of pulleys and gears to be removed from shafts.

Because telephone transmitter microphones become more sensitive in rarefied air European electricians are trying to make practical use of the phenomenon.

A patent has been issued for a platform upon which an automobile may be run to transmit power to any machinery through drums on which its rear wheels rest.

An arrow to be mounted on top of an automobile and operated by its driver is a St. Louis inventor's idea for a signal to show which way the car is about to turn.

Soundproof telephone booths of European invention are built of five layers of thin wood, the grain being crossed each time before layers are glued together.

An automatic electric heater, to be connected to a lighting circuit, features a new dough raising cabinet intended by its inventor to save housewives much trouble.

Eleven United States patents have been granted to the Japanese inventor of a non-combustible substitute for celluloid for which many industrial uses have been found.

For fighting fires in cellars or the holds of vessels a revolving nozzle has been invented that can scatter 1,400 gallons of water a minute over an area of 125 square feet.

Norway expects to produce 100,000 tons of peat for fuel this year and Denmark 500,000 tons, the former country having 216 machines at work as compared with fifty-five last year.

Vessels that are lined with metal that will conduct electricity to heat liquids as they are poured from one to another have been patented by an inventor in Pennsylvania.

The Brazilian Government has decreed that products offered for sale as butter must contain at least eighty per cent of butter fat and not more than fifteen per cent of acid content.

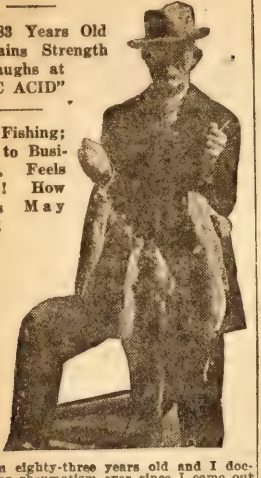
Recently invented wire netting with protruding points to prevent cats and squirrels climbing trees also can be used to hold cotton saturated with insecticide to keep caterpillars away.

It is believed that large quantities of an oil with many commercial uses can be obtained from the nuts of the coyol palm, which grows prolifically in Central and tropical South America.

Finds Cure For Rheumatism After Suffering 50 Years

Now 83 Years Old —Regains Strength and laughs at "URIC ACID"

Goes Fishing; Back to Business, Feels Fine! How Others May Do It!



"I am eighty-three years old and I doctored for rheumatism ever since I came out of the army over fifty years ago. Like many others, I spent money freely for so-called 'cures,' and I have read about 'Uric Acid' until I could almost taste it. I could not sleep nights or walk without pain; my hands were so sore and stiff I could not hold a pen. But now I am again in active business and can walk with ease or write all day with comfort. Friends are surprised at the change."

HOW IT HAPPENED.

Mr. Ashelman is only one of thousands who suffered for years, owing to the general belief in the old, false theory that "Uric Acid" causes rheumatism. This erroneous belief induced him and legions of unfortunate men and women to take wrong treatments. You might just as well attempt to put out a fire with oil as to try and get rid of your rheumatism, neuritis and like complaints, by taking treatment supposed to drive Uric Acid out of your blood and body. Many physicians and scientists now know that Uric Acid never did, never can and never will cause rheumatism; that it is a natural and necessary constituent of the blood; that it is found in every new-born babe, and that without it we could not live!

HOW OTHERS MAY BENEFIT FROM A GENEROUS GIFT.

These statements may seem strange to some folks, because nearly all sufferers have all along been led to believe in the old "Uric Acid" humbug. It took Mr. Ashelman fifty years to find out this truth. He learned how to get rid of the true cause of his rheumatism, other disorders and recover his strength from "The Inner Mysteries," a remarkable book that is now being distributed free by an authority who devoted over twenty years to the scientific study of this particular trouble. If any reader of the "Moving Picture Stories" wishes a copy of this book that reveals startling facts overlooked by doctors and scientists for centuries past, simply send a post-card or letter to H. P. Clearwater, 534 Water street, Hallowell, Maine, and it will be sent by return mail without any charge whatever. Send now. You may never get this opportunity again. If not a sufferer yourself, hand this good news to some friend who may be afflicted.

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To You, Miss or Mrs., About Your Hair

This is a plain talk of real importance to you because it is absolutely honest and the information is genuine.

You have been losing your hair. It comes out on the comb or brush. The steady loss, as well as the fact that you hair is becoming **thinner and weaker,** is worrying you.

You have tried different lotions, tonics, washes, etc., that were recommended or which you saw advertised. None of these have done you any good. They were not the right remedy for your hair.

Well, dear Madam, here is a message of good cheer. It comes from a man.

Years ago when I was almost entirely bald I came across an old Cherokee Indian who induced me to try his recipe for growing hair. He told me that the principle of this formula was used by all Indians, male and female, wherever they found a weed of it.

You know that Indian women (and men too) have long, beautiful hair.

So I tried the recipe. The compound was an ointment for the scalp. It had a bad odor and was rather nasty. But my hair grew—and has continued to grow. Since then I have never had any trouble with my hair. At the age of 66 I now possess an abundant growth and visit the barber each month to have it cut. Once, after an accident, when I was compelled to remain in the hospital for several weeks, it grew so long that it was like a woman's flourishing hair growth.

The recipe I obtained from the old Indian savant and it has been used by many others. I have had the formula modernized by a practical chemist so that the comfort, ointment now has a more pleasant odor and is more agreeable to apply to the scalp and base of the hair.

It contains no alcohol nor any of those ingredients which tend to dry the hair, scalp and roots. On the contrary, it is a fertilizing compound. The Indian principle is that it must contain elements from the three natural Kingdoms. This rule is maintained in the recipe.

I want you to try this cosmetic on your scalp. It can be applied when retiring each night, only a few moments being required. It is likely you will find a very satisfactory result, almost from the outset.

Now make no mistake; this is not a lovely scented preparation. There's nothing fancy about it. The name is Kotaiko and you shall have the recipe free of cost by writing for it. Your druggist can supply the cosmetic according to the recipe; or you may obtain the compound from me, ready to use. Send me your name and address. The recipe will come free. If you would like a proof bo of the cosmetic, enclose 25 cents, silver or stamps. My address is: John Hart Brittain, BD-101, 150 East Thirty-second St., New York, N. Y.

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Electric Hygienic Machine

30 Days' Trial. Don't Be a Dead One at Fifty

Should be in Every Home

It increases blood circulation, strengthens and soothes the nerves. Brings sleep to the sleepless.

The Vigorous Man or Woman is Leader of All

You cannot realize the benefits derived from this machine except you try it. One treatment will convince you of its extraordinary qualities. If you are a sufferer of paralysis, locomotor ataxia, vertigo, headaches, neuralgia, nervousness, general or sexual weakness, apoplexy, neuritis, rheumatism, gout, lumbago or hardening arteries, be sure to investigate this machine. Takes the place of exercise. Give your muscles firm elasticity; be neither fat nor thin.

NORMALIZE YOUR WEIGHT

Do you realize what this machine means to one wanting in vital strength, or suffering from **nervous debility, insomnia, prostate gland trouble and varicose veins?**

Invented by Prof. J. B. Roche.

BOOK FREE

Remember this Machine is not a vibrator or a high frequency or a galvanic nuisance; but a genuine health helping, life prolonging apparatus. No wires to connect. All you have to do is to throw on the switch. Be sure to write for FREE BOOK. *It is for men and women* who want to become healthy, vigorous and efficient. This means you! Address: **Roche Electric Machine Co., 55, Grand Rapids, Mich.**

With this country entering its second year in the "World War" it is doubtful if the song which will be known as the "Hit of the War," has as yet made its appearance. While it is true that such War Songs as "Over There" and "Liberty Bell" have made some impression, have Our Boys adopted another "It's A Long Way To Tipperary," which has been the great favorite with the "English Tommies"? Inasmuch as several Commanders of our training cantonments have requested boys in the service to write such a song, it appears to be still wanting.

Have you an idea which you think might be used as the subject for a Patriotic or War Song? If so, you may secure some valuable information and assistance by writing for a Free Copy of our new booklet entitled "SONG WRITERS' MANUAL AND GUIDE." We revise song-poems, compose and arrange music, secure copyright and facilitate free publication or outright sale.

Poems submitted examined FREE.

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September Morn Ring—Free

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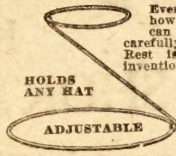

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